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LD1905131588 [Editorial Report]

Lebanon

The southern suburb does not pose a military problem, and Syrian forces will enter it "sooner or later," Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Talas stated in remarks reported by Beirut radio. Talas was speaking in Beirut, where he held talks with Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an and other senior Syrian officers 18 May, Voice of Lebanon radio noted. Meanwhile, Kan'an held further talks with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, noting in remarks broadcast by Beirut radio after the meeting that the implementation of the Syrian decision to enter the suburb has been "held up" in order to give political efforts a chance to achieve a solution. Kan'an maintained that neither Iran nor Hizballah is opposed to Syria's entry into the suburb, and he warned that if political efforts do not succeed, "there will be other action."

A Hizballah spokesman cited by AFP 19 May expressed Hizballah's willingness to allow "limited numbers" of Syrian troops into the suburb to take control of checkpoints, and he noted that Syrian-Iranian talks were continuing on arrangements for the Syrian deployment. For Iran's part, Besharati noted earlier that his country is proposing the formation of a force to maintain security in the suburb after the consolidation of the cease-fire and withdrawal of gunmen, Beirut radio reported. Iran and Syria will jointly "guarantee" this force, he said, but Iranian Revolution Guards will "not be involved" in the suburb. Besharati also predicted that the issue of foreign hostages will be "solved" if and when the present state of war is ended.

A source "close to Syria" stated that one of the main reasons why Syria postponed deploying its forces in the southern suburb was a threat by the captors of Western hostages to kill their captives if Syria intervened in the area, according to Radio Monte Carlo. A diplomatic source in Beirut cited by KUNA claimed that the United States has sought to dissuade Syria from entering the suburb because of concern that the move would endanger the hostages' lives. The source also maintained that the United States has been holding contacts with Iran over the fate of U.S. hostages in Lebanon.

On the military situation, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported that Amal-Hizballah fighting resumed in Al-Shiyah and Al-Ghubayrah 19 May in disregard of cease-fire agreements. AFP cited estimates that 199 people have been killed and 1,118 injured in the fighting during the past 2 weeks.

Iran-France

Delegations from Iran and France will meet in the near future to restore diplomatic ties between the two countries, Iranian Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi announced in remarks cited by IRNA 19 May. French President Francois Mitterrand had earlier called on the new government in Paris to establish a time table for restoring diplomatic relations with Iran, AFP reported. In remarks carried by Paris radio, French Prime Minister Michel Rocard affirmed that France will honor the commitment made in negotiations with Iran; however, he expressed the "reservation" that his country "might discover that the conditions of the negotiations were not such that they merit respect."

Iran-Iraq War

Action in North—During the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-6" operations, Iranian forces liberated 25 square kilometers of territory in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province, captured a "substantial amount" of equipment, and inflicted more than 2,000 casualties on the Iraqis, an IRGC communique broadcast by Tehran radio announced. Iranian artillery fire in the northwestern front killed and wounded "scores" of enemy soldiers, according to a Joint Staff communique carried by IRNA. An air force commander cited by the agency denied an Iraqi claim that a Iranian warplane was shot down.

IRNA accused Iraq of dropping chemical bombs on a village near Marivan, killing three civilians and wounding eight others. More than 3,000 Iraqis, mostly Kurdish women and children, fled to Iran to escape the effects of recent chemical attacks on their villages, Tehran radio reported.

Iraqi Commander Sacked—According to an RCC decree cited by WAKH, the commander of the VII Army Corps was dismissed for not properly fulfilling his duties in connection with the offensive to recapture Al-Faw.

Tanker Attack—Iranian speedboats attacked a Norwegian oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz at dawn 19 May, according to a Lloyds report cited by Radio Monte Carlo. The attack caused a fire which was quickly extinguished. Tehran radio cited a REUTER report on the attack by "gunboats."

Kuwait

Two Kuwaiti men planning sabotage were killed when an explosive device went off inside their car in downtown Kuwait City, according to an Interior Ministry announcement cited by KUNA.

Israel

The prime minister's office announced that a "decision in principle" has been made to prohibit granting Israeli visas to Jews who want to leave the USSR but do not plan to come to Israel, Jerusalem radio reported.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Receives Iraq's 'Aziz; USSR, CSSR Envoys

JN1805192988 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1748 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has received at his Baghdad residence Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz. They discussed the recent developments and the current preparations for the convening of the Arab summit on 7 June in Algeria. The meeting was attended by Nur al-Wayyis, Iraqi deputy foreign minister, and Brother 'Azzam al-Ahmad, PLO representative in Baghdad.

Brother leader Abu 'Ammar also received at his residence the USSR ambassador accredited to fraternal Iraq. The ambasador conveyed a message to him from the Soviet leaders. Brother Abu 'Ammar gave the ambassador an important message to the Soviet leaders. The exchange of messages comes in the framework of the continuous coordination between the Palestinian and Soviet leaderships. The meeting was attended by Brother 'Azzam al-Ahmad, PLO representative in Baghdad.

Brother leader Abu 'Ammar received at his residence the CSSR ambassador. The ambassador handed him an invitation from the Czechoslovak leadership to visit Czechoslovakia. Brother Abu 'Ammar expressed his thanks for the invitation, the date of which will be fixed later. The meeting was attended by Brother 'Azzam al-Ahmad, PLO representative in Baghdad.

UK Television Interviews 'Arafat on Arab Issues

LD1305230188 London ITV Television Network in English 1915 GMT 13 May 88

[Report on interview with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by unidentified correspondent on the "Dispatches" program; interview conducted in English in Baghdad; date unspecified—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] "Dispatches" visits several Middle Eastern nations to consider the future of one of the Jewish state's strongest opponents, the PLO, and speaks in a rare interview with the organization's Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

This weekend the State of Israel celebrates 40 years of nationhood but for the Palestinians, 4 decades of occupation are increasingly marked by violent clashes with Israeli soldiers. Tonight, for the first time, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat talks about the murder of his deputy Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] and explains the new shift of PLO policy in the Middle East. "Dispatches" examines whether Palestinian armed struggle can continue indefinitely, how the PLO organizes, finances, and maintains its support, and whether its leaders have any real prospects of success in a state of struggle.

The Jewish population of Israel has good reason to celebrate the nation's 40th birthday and the anniversary is keeping the country's main flag manufacturer working at full capacity, but for the Arab population, 1988 has seen an eruption of violent frustration at 40 years of Israeli occupation. While the uprising has forced the Palestine issue back on to the world's political agenda, it has also restored the political credibility of the PLO.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] When we had started, nobody was intending to listen to us, but now we are proud that it is not the resistance of the vanguards and pioneers. It is the resistance and the revolution of all our people, all our children, all our women, all our people, all our men. This is the accumulation of the revolution. [end recording]

[Announcer] We trailed 'Arafat through three countries and finally caught up with him and a group of senior PLO officials at 0300 in Baghdad. They were eating their main Ramadan meal inside the chairman's heavily guarded headquarters. [passage omitted]

The extent of Islamic fundamentalist influence on the uprising is uncertain. As the PLO see it, the long shadow of Muslim extremism has been carefully nurtured by the Israelis to discredit the secular Palestinians.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] There was an attempt from the Israeli military junta in the beginning to say that it is a part of the Khomeyni [movement], then they were surprised, because, what about the Christian churches, Christian Palestinian churches when they cancelled the celebrations of Christmas and the New Year, and Easter. Also, they are receiving orders from Khomeyni? Then they began to say no, it is not the PLO. Then why they killed my brother Abu Jihad? They declared that they had killed him to influence the intifadah and the uprising, and they were obliged to say that this uprising had been controlled completely by the PLO. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Announcer] The guerrillas' first significant success, holding off an Israeli attack at Al-Karamah in Jordan in 1968, has entered Palestinian folklore.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] It was a turning point. We faced this huge up to date Israeli forces. In the beginning we were alone. After 5 hours some small battalions from the Jordanian Government attended us and fought with us without any central instructions from headquarters, but in the end it was the first victory for the Arab nation, after this big defeat of 1967. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Announcer] Israel has found it easy to portray the PLO as nothing but a terrorist organization. Nevertheless, 'Arafat is uprepentant.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] We have to remember, George Washington was a terrorist according to the British Empire. De Gaulle, Charles de Gaulle, was a terrorist according to the point of view of the Nazist occupation;

but it is a part of our resistance against this Israeli military occupation, against this Israeli-organized official terrorism. What you call the assassination of my brother Abu Jihad? What you call the killing of the children, the Palestinian children, the Palestinian women? What you are calling this last invasion against Lebanese, Palestinian civilians in the south of Lebanon? What you call it? This is the real organized official terrorism. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Announcer] The costs of running the PLO are immense. The newly oil rich Arab states rewarded the PLO's political resolve after Camp David and voted it a $125 million per year at the 1978 Arab summit. At the same time, the PLO itself was able to generate a sizable income through its occupation of Lebanon with extortion, import monopolies, and other illegal activities.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] No doubt there is a, we are getting our support, financial support from our Arab nation and from our Arab brother countries. It is known. And our budget is open in the Arab League because we are getting money from our brothers and from this, from all the Palestinians who are working everywhere. Every Palestinian is paying 5 percent of his income. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Foreign intelligence sources suggest that the PLO controls capital assets of about $1 billion and has an annual income of about $250 million. What is the truth of this?

['Arafat] We are very rich through this strong support from our masses, which is more important than any other wealth all over the world.

[Correspondent] But can you put a figure on the kind of financial resources the organization has?

['Arafat] I have told you the realities and facts, that our main wealth is this strong unlimited support from our masses, the absolute support of our masses. This is our treasure.

[Correspondent] But isn't it really true...

['Arafat, interrupting] Which is more important than any other treasure.

[Correspondent] But isn't the PLO really much more like a multinational corporation with investments all over the world than a popular revolution?

['Arafat] Again you are repeating the same slogans of the Israeli propaganda. [laughs]

[Correspondent] You cannot tell me about your investments?

['Arafat] We haven't the investments you are mentioning. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Announcer] Arab unity is an absolute prerequisite for any settlement and the first meeting for 5 years between the two old adversaries, Chairman 'Arafat and President al-Asad is a good step forward. 'Arafat himself appears confident of the future.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] We had agreed upon, during the last discussion between me and President al-Asad in Damascus, to support the international conference to solve the Palestinian problem, the Middle East issue, and under the UN auspices with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict, and this will be according to all UN resolutions including 242 and 338 according to the international legality. So, it is clear and obvious that in my opinion this will strengthen more and more the chances to achieve peace, real peace, just peace. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Begin 'Arafat recording] From the first moment, we did not deceive our people. We said that it is a long breath resistance because we know that we are facing huge enemies with strong allies. We are not facing the Israelis or the Israeli Government or this Israeli military junta. We are facing the Israeli military junta, supported with unlimited support from the American Administration, from some European countries, by all means and at all levels, economical support, financial support, political support, military support, and all kind of support. So, from the first moment we said that it is a long breath resistance and struggle. [end recording]

Qaddumi Interviewed on Upcoming Arab Summit

LD1505021188 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 14 May 88

["First part" of an interview with Faruq Qaddumi, chairman of the PLO Political Department, by unidentified correspondent in Algiers, date not specified—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Brother Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], good evening.

[Qaddumi] Good Evening.

[Correspondent] You have been touring a number of Arab countries for several days. What is the aim of your current tour?

[Qaddumi] The main purpose of this tour is to discuss the Arab issues, to tackle in particular the Palestinian uprising, to summarize the events of this uprising and the achievements it reached during this span, then back once again to the discussion of the Arab summit, and the ways and means through which it is possible to increase Arab support on all levels for the Palestinian uprising. In addition, it has been clearly noticed that there has been an Arab awakening following this uprising, and that the

chances of consolidating Arab solidarity have become greater, and the next Arab summit will witness a good deal of success and pan-Arab concord.

[Correspondent] Fine, Brother Abu al-Lutf, as we are tackling the issue of the Arab summit, the host country, Algeria, has set the date of convening the summit as 7 June. Concerning the summit, we have a multi-part question. First, how does the architect of Palestinian foreign policy, Brother Abu al-Lutf, look on this summit? Second, will this summit issue routine resolutions, as the Arab masses are now accustomed to, or will it be indeed, as the host country determined it, executive resolutions for the benefit of the Palestinian issue and uprising? Third, what are the PLO and the Palestinian people expecting from this emergency summit?

[Qaddumi] We have to take into consideration that the Arab meeting as such, and the summit for the uprising in particular, is an important matter. This means that the Arab nation is deeply interested in the uprising and is very concerned about its continuation and intensification. It is endeavoring in a joint way, not a separate way with every country on its own, but through this Arab community to continue this uprising and step it up until it achieves the national aims it has determined for itself. Undoubtedly this Arab event, and not just Palestinian event, that is, the uprising, is a historic turning point in the history of the Arab region. It has influenced the psychological condition of the Arab masses, which has, in turn, influenced political decisions in the region.

Undoubtedly, Arab unanimity, which must be achieved through this meeting in order to make political decisions so as to deal with the situation in the Middle East, is very important. This has also been seen in other Arab issues and problems. This has, in our opinion, created a spirit of tolerance and desire to solve the Arab disputes, and adopt other measures in order to solve numerous problems faced by the Arab nation. This has also been seen in the great problems, struggles, and bloody confrontations faced by the Arab nation in the East and the West. This matter is clearly confirmed in the heroic battle waged by the Iraqi Army in a short period during which it was able to free a part of Arab Iraq.

In addition to that, a wave of peace and security is reaching the Gulf region due to this Arab capacity to defend the Arab land, to establish peace on it, and to lead to a period during which it will be able to again fully support the central issue—the Palestinian cause—without any other hindrances or concerns.

The removal of numerous Arab concerns due to these positive events occurring in the Arab region will make the Arab summit successful. This will inevitably lead to the stepping up of the uprising, as well as to the weakening of the combatting capacities of the Israeli Army, to confuse it, to annoy it, to set fear in Israeli hearts, and to end the Israeli occupation. Also, this will surely convince those countries that are trying to give support to Israel. Undoubtedly, the various trips by U.S. officials are aimed at appeasing the uprising, a matter that has been unveiled by the stances of those Arab countries that were visited. All those stances were discharged into the same sea; a sea which is (?well known), that is, rejecting any initiative that does not guarantee the (?legitimate) rights of the Palestinian people, notwithstanding the difference in the accent of the languages used to express the various Arab stances. The United States, which supports Israel, is impairing the UN Security Council's resolutions and, furthermore, is trying to conspire against some Palestinian leaders by using means (?which) I would call international terrorism.

The Arab nation—which has promised itself to continue its struggle with all available means, particularly inside the occupied territories, as the Palestinian people are doing, and which is speaking out and acting from a position of strength stemming from its belief in the inevitability of its victory, the end of occupation, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, using all legitimate means—is ready to accept a just peace, but only from a position of strength. And Arabs, while carrying out their daily struggle, do not, at the same time, forget to effectively contribute to the elimination of international terrorism, a matter that has (?shaken) the United States and Israel and bewildered their allies, as they have started to feel that peace-loving peoples throughout the world have deserted them and have sympathetically supported and consolidated the Arab right and the blessed Palestinian uprising.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu al-Lutf, undoubtedly the holding of the forthcoming emergency Arab summit with the attendance of all Arab countries indicates that Arab officials are safeguarding, or at least trying to safeguard, a minimum level solidarity and understanding among themselves, a fact that would lead one to say that there is (?a degree of control) over inter-Arab relations and thereby over Arab-Palestinian relations. We have lately witnessed this sort of improvement in Palestinian-Arab relations, particularly with Syria. What stage have we reached, in light of your contacts and dialogue in the Syrian capital, in doing so?

[Qaddumi] The Palestinian cause, as we have already asserted and which has also been affirmed by Arab resolutions, is the essence of the Arab struggle in the Middle East region. Any new developments concerning such a cause will immediately have positive and negative repercussions upon Arab stances. The martyrdom of the brother hero Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], who was a revolutionary symbol, was the beginning of a meeting between us and our Syrian brothers. So Abu Jihad's generosity, when he was alive or because of his martyrdom, was great. [sentence as heard] His martyrdom (?brought sooner) the meeting between us and Damascus. A brotherly dialogue took place between us and our brother Syrians—a meeting which was needed by pan-Arab supreme interests and during which an atmosphere of understanding and optimism prevailed. In addition,

the need to learn lessons from the past without going through the old painful and sad experiences, along with a determination to reach, through continued dialogue, a (?political) concord between us and them based upon the Arab summit resolutions, were agreed on at the meeting.

We also agreed that as one of the confrontation forces we are shouldering the greatest burden in our confrontation with the Israeli enemy in order to end the occupation, and are continuing this escalating process for the sake of realizing the national objectives. This will reinforce inter-Arab relations and will move positively to form the basis for other inter-Arab dialogues, and could possibly contribute noticeably toward improving these relations by reinforcing common Arab action, Arab solidarity, and the Arab League, despite occasional failures that reflect diverse interpretations and views, but which will inevitably merge into the common Arab struggle stressed in the resolutions of successive Arab summits.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu al-Lutf, let us move from the Arab summit to another summit, namely the superpower summit, because a few days from now this summit will be held between the Soviet leader and the U.S. President. In light of the latest visit by the brother leader, Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] to Moscow and the visit of the accompanying Palestinian delegation and the talks that took place and the declared Soviet stances during that visit and after it, what is the share of the Palestinian issue in particular and the Middle East region in general in this summit?

[Qaddumi] The visit of the Palestinian delegation headed by brother Abu 'Ammar to Moscow was a significant point in Palestinian-Soviet relations. We put forward all of our concerns with total frankness and clarity and we heard a positive response to all those issues that concern the Palestinian people and the Arab nation. The desire was urgent on the part of the Soviet leadership, at the head of which is Comrade Gorbachev, to see this uprising continue and escalate, stressing that it is difficult for the enemy to face up to this democratic struggle, and if it faced it with arms and live ammunition, then it will be condemned not only by the peoples of the Middle East but also by the entire world, a matter that will give the Palestinian people and their blessed uprising more support and bring them nearer to the realization of the national objective of eliminating the occupation.

The Soviet Union has also affirmed its firm and principled stand vis-a-vis the national rights of the Palestinian people; their right to self-determination, their right to set up an independent Palestinian state on their national soil, and that the Soviet Union will never abandon any of these rights and will remain by our side and by the side of our struggle, backing this struggle until these objectives are realized. And here we notice clearly that the Soviet Union affirms these stands in all of its official statements and affirms its earlier initiatives. The Soviet Union is not only adopting a political stand but is taking practical initiatives and moves within international arenas, particularly with the United States, with the aim of altering its unsupportive position and its biased stand toward Israel.

There is no doubt that the Soviet Union and the socialist community are making significant efforts in support of the Palestinian issue. We are (?grateful) to the socialist community and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, out of its desire to solve regional conflicts, is exerting its efforts with the United States and other countries, and through the United Nations—as was the case when Comrade Shevardnadze sent two messages to the United Nations calling for a Security Council meeting at the foreign ministerial level to prepare for an international conference with full competence and with the participation of the PLO on equal footing with the other concerned parties to the conflict.

[Correspondent] Well Brother Abu al-Lutf, between the two summits, there is a U.S. move. Shultz is coming back to the region for the fourth time within a short period. In your view is he carrying something new? The statements that preceded his fourth tour say that Shultz is coming back to the area because the leaders there want that, bearing in mind that the officials in the Middle East have declared their disappointment with Shultz and his tours. What is your comment on this?

[Qaddumi] Shultz did not bring in the past nor will he bring in the future positive plans that could affect the peace process in the Middle East region. He has come, as we affirmed earlier, with age-old ideas that the United States has previously put forward and were mentioned by statements from Israeli officials on various occasions. No doubt the basic objective of Shultz' visit is to quell the uprising. He will present plans aimed at stopping this uprising and return the regional situation to its former position.

The present U.S. Administration is in reality a transitory administration and has been afflicted by a number of scandals. I do not think it is capable of making even one centimeter of progress toward a just peace. Thus it is trying at the closing days of its life to give the impression that the United States is in favor of peace. However, and regretably, it is behaving simultaneously in a manner far from peaceful and is stirring up more conflicts. And as the people's proverb says: [words indistinct] and the work is a work of devils. This in fact is what the present U.S. Administration is. However, we should notice that the U.S. media has contributed objectively in conveying the picture of the Middle East. [Words indistinct] that has had a positive effect on U.S. public opinion and we need more of this media reporting that conveys to the American people the reality of the situation so that they will see that peace and a solution to the problem of the Middle East cannot be accomplished as long as Israel continues its occupation of part of the Arab territories, be it Palestinian or Arab, and as long as the Palestinian

people are not enjoying their full rights, their right to self-determination without outside interference in setting up their state, and the return of the refugees to their land.

The struggle will remain for years to come and no doubt the countdown for the end of the Israeli presence has started as well as the countdown for the revolutionary march of the Palestinian people. Optimism is showing on the horizon for the termination of the Israeli occupation within a short period despite the sacrifices and high price we are paying. Freedom (?has a price) and our Palestinian people will get their freedom, independence, and sovereignty despite [words indistinct] and despite the U.S. bias.

The world now is with us. The great majority of the United Nations stood by us against the decision of the United States, in the form of the U.S. Congress, to close down our offices; all the countries of the world except Israel and the United States were against this decision. The International Court of Justice has also ruled for arbitration and that the United States has violated its international commitments. The world is with us in our informational and political battle and this affirms our victory in the end. Israel did not rise because it was militarily strong, rather the international equation in 1948 was responsible for the establishment of Israel, bearing in mind that the Arab armies were capable of sweeping the entire Palestinian territories, but the international equation prevented that. However, we can see that the international equation today is in our favor despite the stand of the United States and we will be victorious in this battle, God willing, in a period not far from now.

Source Denies Reported Iraqi Arrest of Israelis

LD1805153588 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 18-24 May 88 p 11

[Unattributed report: "Palestinian Denial of Report of Iraq's Detention of Six Israelis"]

[Text] In a statement exclusive to AL-MAJALLAH a responsible Palestinian source refuted recent reports that the Iraqi authorities had arrested six Israelis who were assigned to carry out an alternative operation to assassinate the Palestinian leader, Martyr Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), in Baghdad if the operation to assassinate him on Tunisian territory had failed.

The official emphasized that all that happened was that, a short time before his martyrdom, Abu Jihad suspected that one person was playing a double-agent role and working for Israeli intelligence. So he turned him over to the appropriate Iraqi security authorities for interrogation. He pointed out that nothing was proved against that person, so he was released and deported from Iraqi territory.

Meanwhile, contrary to what is being reported, namely that the question of Abu Jihad's successor has not yet been broached, the official confirmed that this issue will be discussed at a Fatah Central Committee meeting that may be held to mark the passage of 40 days since Abu Jihad's martyrdom.

Commentary on U.S. Cutting Contribution to UNRWA

JN1805182288 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1639 GMT 18 May 88

[Unattributed commentary: "UNRWA, the U.S. Millions, and the Palestinian Vigor"]

[Text] Brothers, what weapons does Washington still have to punish the Palestinians? What is there after the comprehensive oppression, the odious killings, and the mad assassination? What is left after the comprehensive siege? What more after igniting a seventh war that has been unprecedented in the region, a war that has been continuing on all levels and everywhere there is a Palestinian over the past 5 months? What does Washington have now? Finally, Washington has resorted to petty weapons that do not befit its status and prestige as a big power in its grinding war against the Palestinians. After experimenting with all types of weapons, Washington has found that it has nothing left but to go to war against the Palestinians through the flour bags that UNRWA distributes and that barely keeps them alive.

In a confident and triumphant voice, the U.S. Administration has announced that it has reduced its 1988 contribution to UNRWA by $6 million. Washington announces this, fully confident but completely deluded that such a decision will be an extraordinary means of pressure that will enable it to smash the Palestinian vigor and the Palestinian people's great uprising.

What kind of logic is the United States using? How pitiful is this U.S. pragmatism? Have they really completely lost their senses after all that has taken place and is taking place in their sight and hearing and following their complete failure to even graze this Palestinian vigor in spite of their violation of all the taboos in the grinding war they have declared against all that is Palestinian?

After all this, do they expect that they will reap something good from reducing the UNRWA budget by $6 million? Really, they do not know the Palestinians. They do not know that any rich Palestinians, any poor Palestinian human bloc, and any Palestinian group of average means can settle this sum without batting an eye, not through the UNRWA but directly to the Palestinian people. How wretched and useless is this!

The Americans have actually fallen in the quagmire of defeat. This represents the last few yards to our great Palestinian victory. These are the last moments before victory. These are the last minutes before the U.S.-Israeli defeat. Victory is ours.

Chad

Clashes Between Libyan, Arab Mercenaries Reported

AB1805194688 Libreville Africa No 1 in French 1830 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Troops of the regular Libyan Army and Syrian-Lebanese-Palestinian mercenaries recruited by Tripoli to fight against the Chadian Army are no longer on terms of endearment. Aozou in northern Chad is becoming the cradle of internal conflict between these groups. Ali Kaya in Ndjamena has more on this:

[Begin recording] Clashes are taking place at this moment in Aozou between the regular Libyan Army and the Lebanese-Palestinian mercenaries recruited by Al-Qadhdhafi, Radio Chad announced early this afternoon. According to the radio, which did not furnish figures on the casualties, the clashes resulted from friction that appeared within the ranks of the two forces whose cohabitation has never been easy. This situation, according to the government-controlled radio, has been excacerbated by the favorable biased treatment given to the Palestinian and Lebanese troops by the (?Tripoli) regime which brought them from certain Arab countries at a great cost. The Chadian Radio [words indistinct] the Libyan Army finds this discrimination extremely shocking and thinks [words indistinct] of the considerable expenditures made by the Libyan regime to maintain an expeditionary corps whose effectiveness is yet to be demonstrated. It must be recalled that this is not the first incident of its kind within the ranks of the occupation forces. Some months ago, still at Aozou, they clashed with heavy weaponry leaving some 40 dead and some 100 wounded. [end recording]

Protocol Signed With PRC on Medical Cooperation

AB1405202488 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 14 May 88

[Excerpt] A Chinese medical team will soon be posted at Ndjamena Central Hospital. A protocol agreement in this regard was signed this morning at the Ministry of Plan and Cooperation between the Republic of Chad and the PRC. According to this protocol agreement, the two countries have agreed to develop their cooperative ties in the field of health. To this end, the PRC will send a medical team to Chad that will be based at the Ndjamena Central Hospital and will be charged with medical treatment in close association with Chadian health personnel for the exchange of professional experience.

The protocol agreement was signed for Chad by Saleh Mahreb, secretary of state for plan and cooperation, and for the PRC by Yang Yongrui, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary in Ndjamena. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Mubarak Receives Message From Chadian President

NC1305114088 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 13 May 88

[Text] This morning President Husni Mubarak received Korom Ahmed, the Chadian president's envoy, who gave his excellency a message from the Chadian president. The Chadian ambassador in Cairo also attended the meeting.

'Abd al-Majid Departs for Visit to Soviet Union

NC1605144288 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1420 GMT 16 May 88

[Text] Cairo, 16 May (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, left Cairo this afternoon on his way to Moscow for an official visit to the Soviet Union.

During his 3-day visit, which will begin on Thursday, Dr 'Abd al-Majid will deliver a message from President Husni Mubarak to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. He will also hold talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on the international issues of common interest, foremost among them being the situation in the Middle East and the Gulf war, as well as bilateral relations and ways to promote them in all fields.

Ambassador on Visit Plans

JN1605074288 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 12 May 88 pp 1, 5

[Text] The Soviet ambassador in Cairo has praised Egyptian-Soviet relations on the occasion of Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid's visit to Moscow on Wednesday.

In an exclusive statement to AL-JUMHURIYAH, he said the exchange of written and verbal messages between President Mubarak and Gorbachev is going on regularly. He added that a new stage of economic cooperation on a large scale will begin with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid's 3-day visit to Moscow.

The ambassador said Dr 'Abd al-Majid and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze will sign technical, economic, trade, and scientific cooperation agreements during the visit. According to these agreements, the trade exchange volume will reach $1 billion.

He added that according to the agreements, the Soviet Union will build a coal-fired electric power station of over 1,000 megawatts in Sinai. It will cost more than $1 billion. The Soviet industrial institutions will also modernize and expand a large number of Egyptian factories, the most important of which are:

— The aluminum plant in Naj' Hammadi in order to increase its production capacity by about 25 percent, but with the same electric power;

— Expansions in the cement plants in order to increase their production capacity;

— Modernizing the Yasin glass plants in Shubra;

— Modernizing and expanding the Alexandria shipyard;

— Modernizing the fertilizers plants;

— Setting up a fourth battery for the production of coke and increasing its local production in Hulwan.

The ambassador said these projects are the beginning of a larger cooperation which his government wishes to expand in various domains. He added: We have previously struck deals with the Armed Forces to supply them with spare parts and we are ready to supply them with other spare parts for the Soviet-made weapons.

Ghali Returns From 3-Week Foreign Tour 13 May
NC1300205900 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1930 GMT 13 May 88

[Excerpt] Caior, 13 May (MENA)—Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, returned to Cairo this evening following a 3-week tour of Switzerland, the Netherlands, Mauritius, and Tanzania. [passage omitted]

Ghali Departs for Conference in Ethiopia 18 May
NC1805062188 Cairo MENA in English 0616 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Cairo, May 18 (MENA)—State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Butrus Ghali left here early this morning for Addis Ababa to take part in the meetings of the conference of African foreign ministers, due to open there later on today.

The eight-day conference is to prepare the agenda of the African summit conference, due to open on May 25, to discuss African debts and to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the setting up of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Cairo-Tripoli Mediation Attempt by UAE Falters
PM1805150788 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 18-24 May 88 p 10

[Unattributed report: "Truth Behind Mediation Between Egypt and Libya"]

[Text] An Egyptian official has confirmed to AL-MAJALLAH that the story of UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan's mediation between Egypt and the Libyan Jamahiriyah was initiated by a telephone call, made by Shaykh Zayid to Egyptian President Husni Mubarak immediately after his 1 May speech in which he talked about Libyan-Egyptian relations.

The official said that Mubarak accepted Shaykh Zayid's offer, namely to dispatch a special envoy to both Tripoli and Cairo, and referred to the need to enhance the new atmosphere between Egypt and Libya by showing good intentions, paying the money owed to nearly 30,000 Egyptian workers who left Libya in 1985, and in addition stopping media campaigns and opening bank and airline branches in both capitals.

Although he accepted the initiative, President Mubarak indicated his conviction that relations between Egypt and Libya will not be restored in the near future.

In response to the telephone call referred to, UAE Foreign Minister al-Nu'aymi made two successive visits to Tripoli and Cairo. He had his fast-breaking meal with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and the pre-fast meal with President Mubarak.

Al-Nu'aymi informed President Mubarak of Colonel al-Qadhdhafi's acceptance of all the conditions he conveyed, including his willingness to restore diplomatic relations provided that Cairo announces its appreciation of the Libyan stand on the Camp David accords and its willingness to abrogate the treaty once circumstances are suitable.

Al-Nu'aymi confirmed that Colonel al-Qadhdhafi informed him of his readiness to meet with President Mubarak either in Cairo or anywhere else he wants. This could be arranged by holding meetings between Egyptian and Libyan officials in any agreed Arab or foreign capital. The Egyptian president emphasized to Al-Nu'aymi that Egypt will not change its previous stands toward Libya until Libyan stands are changed. So a statement was issued by the Libyan People's Bureau emphasizing that Libyan-Egyptian relations are still as they were. Thus a page has been turned in Arab mediation.

Resumption of Relations With Algeria Expected Soon
NC1805192688 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1852 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Cairo, 18 May (MENA)—The weekly magazine AL-MUSAWWAR expects the restoration of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Algeria to be officially announced after President Husni Mubarak meets with Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid in Addis Ababa on 25 May.

In its issue appearing on Friday, the magazine says that Dr Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary of the Foreign Ministry and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, will visit Algeria on Saturday and Sunday to discuss the arrangements for a summit meeting between Presidents Mubarak and Bendjedid. He will also discuss the elimination of obstacles standing in the way of a restoration of diplomatic relations.

The magazine adds that an agreement has been reached on the text of the joint political statement that the two countries will issue simultaneously once relations are restored.

AL-MUSAWWAR—Kuwaiti Plane Hijackers in Libya
NC1805164288 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1625 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Cairo, 18 May (MENA)—The AL-MUSAWWAR magazine, in its issue that will appear the day after tomorrow, reports that the hijackers of the Kuwaiti airliner Al-Jabiriyah left for Libya following the release of the hostages and are still living there. The magazine adds that the hijackers flew to Libya from an Algerian airport aboard a military aircraft. According to AL-MUSAWWAR, Libyan Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi does not wish to announce the presence of the hijackers in his country to avoid it being used to criticize Libya.

King Husayn's Call for Arab Force Applauded
NC1905050588 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2040 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Cairo, 18 May (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR describes as "bold" Jordanian King Husayn's call for the establishment of an Arab army corps as the nucleus of a large Arab military force that will assume the task of defending the Arab nation against danger. The paper declares that his call deserves serious study and research in preparation for effecting it as soon as possible, especially during the present phase in which we see the Arab world facing serious challenges in various areas, whether in the occupied territories, Lebanon, or the Gulf.

In a commentary appearing in Thursday's edition, the paper emphasizes that the realization of the Jordanian monarch's proposal can be a tangible first step to applying the Joint Arab Defense Pact which was drawn up many years ago but which has not been implemented in situations that required its implementation.

The paper stresses that the time has come for the implementation both of this pact and of King Husayn's call. They are effective means to confront any danger surrounding the Arab nation, and by their implementation Arab solidarity will gain world credibility and restore lost confidence in the possibility of a unified Arab action.

Sudan

Further Reportage on Hotel Blast, Club Attack

'Arab State' Trained Attackers
JN1805175688 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1720 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Khartoum, 18 May (SUNA)—Police Director General Lieutenant General Ibrahim Ahmad 'Abd al-Karim has announced that those detained in connection with the incident involving attacks on the Acropol Hotel and the British Club have confessed to receiving training in carrying out such operations in an Arab state. The police director general declined to name that Arab state.

The director general indicated that those arrested stated that their action fell within the framework of a plan based on targeting U.S. and British interests in the Arab region. They also stated that there are only three in their group. They added that their plan for the bombing operations stipulated that one of them be assigned the operation at the Acropol Hotel with another assigned the operation at the British Club.

The police director general affirmed that the police force has achieved an unprecedented success toward concluding the investigation into this case.

Information Minister Comments
JN1805184388 Khartoum SUNA in English 1729 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Khartoum, May 18, (SUNA)—Police is still investigating to find out facts about the Sunday explosion in Central Khartoum in which seven people were killed including a British family of four.

Nobody or organization has so far claimed responsibility for the explosions Sunday evening at the Acropol Hotel and the British Community Sudan Club.

Sudan's new information minister and the government's official spokesman 'Abdallah Muhammad Ahmad yesterday told journalists here that police was still interrogating three foreigners who were arrested in connection with the attacks.

He said the three, whose names he did not disclose, were holding Lebanese passports and arrived Sudan a few months ago as businessmen and that they had already registered three companies in Sudan as investing ones.

They got entry visas to Sudan from the Sudanese Embassy in Kuwait from where they left to West Germany before arriving to Sudan, he added.

He said the three had denied any connection with the attacks although police said they found documents with the suspects.

He said premilinary investigations showed that the attackers had planned to bomb the hotel at mid dinner time when the restaurant would have been full of guests and at the same time bomb the British Sudan Club where a party was supposed to be held but for some reasons the bomb at the hotel exploded before its scheduled time.

He added that police had not yet found out whether the bomb at the hotel was planted there and a remote control device was used or whether it was thrown in there by somebody.

He said the sudden early explosion at the hotel alerted the people at the nearby Sudan Club who managed to partially evacuate the building although the attackers arrived there and threw in some grenades and opened fire with machine guns wounding two people.

He said if it was not for the early explosion at the hotel, a great massacre would have taken place and the death toll would have multiplied.

He said police had found out that the three suspects were wearing three suits of clothes when they were arrested (at the bottom a Sudanese jullabia then a safari suit and on top a training suit).

He said two of the suspects where seen throwing away some of their clothes and two machines guns nearby the venue of the attacks and two of them were arrested a short time later with the help of trained police dogs and the third one was ambushed later on while entering the house where the three lived.

Police found out some documents and a paper with drawings with one of the suspects and is trying to find out whether those drawings meant that other bombs were planted somewhere else or they were just of the hotel and the club, the minister said.

Army Officer Killed in Hotel

JN1905104388 Khartoum SUNA in English 1020 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Khartoum, May 19 (SUNA)—The Ministry of Interior Wednesday confirmed that a senior Army officer was among seven persons killed in the Acropol Hotel explosion.

A statement by the Ministry issued here Wednesday identified the killed Army officer as second commander of the Engineers Corps Ibrahim 'Abd al-Majid Ahmad.

The statement said Ahmad happened to be in the hotel at the time of the explosion. The statement said he was there to deliver personal letters to one of the residents of the hotel.

General Salah Mustafa Views Talks With Ethiopia

LD1705182888 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 2230 GMT 16 May 88

[Text] The joint Sudanese-Ethiopian technical committee concluded its business yesterday at the Friendship Palace Hotel in northern Khartoum.

Major General Salah Mustafa, leader of the Sudanese side, said: We reached a common view of the basic problems that in the past led to a deterioration in our relations. The committee investigated the sources of these problems and agreed on a framework for resolving them. This may pave the way to a complete solution in the future and afford the two countries' political leaders a better chance to achieve stability and peace.

He said the committee will shortly resume its meetings in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, to complete its work. It will submit its final report to the ministerial committee and to the summit meeting between Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam.

Radio SPLA: 'Strategic' Bridge Destroyed 9 May

EA1805173288 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 18 May 88

[Excerpts] A demolition unit of "Bright Star" operation blew up the strategic bridge across Khawr Dulayb a few miles from Torit, on 9 May 1988. [passage omitted]

A platoon of SPLA from Imotong Battalion, under the direct command of Captain William Manyok, carried out a surprise attack on Ikoto enemy garrison on 5 May 1988 and inflicted untold casualties on the enemy.

Correspondent says that one heavy machine gun of the enemy was put out of action. [passage omitted]

Intra-Gulf

Speedboats Attack Japanese Chemical Tanker

OW1805131388 Tokyo KYODO in English 1226 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Cairo, May 18 KYODO—A Japanese ship of Panamanian registry was attacked by Iranian boats in the Strait of Homuz in the Persian Gulf Wednesday morning, according to shipping authorities in Dubayy.

The 6,730-ton tanker "Ace Chemi" caught fire after its engine room was struck by two rockets launched from three Iranian high-speed gun boats. The crew, one Japanese and 16 Koreans were reported safe. It was the first Iranian assault on a ship since the U.S. Government announced April 29 that the U.S. Navy would protect all neutral ships.

The last neutral boat to be targetted by Iran was a Saudi Arabian tanker on April 24. Saudi Arabia cut off relations with Iran after the attack.

Iraq fired on five Iranian ships including the world's largest supertanker "Seawise Giant" last Saturday cruising near Larak Island in the Strait of Hormuz. Iraq also announced its assaults on Iranian ships early this week. Iran's attacks Wednesday were seen as retaliation for the Iraqi attacks.

The crew of the "Ace Chemi," owned by the Okayama-based Mizushima Shoun Co., escaped to safety in lifeboats, according to reports received from the company by Japan's Transport Ministry.

Kuwait

Car Bomb Blast Kills Two in Kuwait City

LD1805224588 Kuwait KUNA in English 2208 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Kuwait, May 18 (KUNA)—An official source at the Interior Ministry announced tonight that an explosive device went off in a car at nearly 9:00 p.m. in Hilaly Street in Kuwait City.

The two occupants of the car were killed in the explosion, the source said and identified them as Nasir Muhammad 'Ali Hassan Ahmad, 22, Kuwaiti and Walid 'Abd al-Nabi Muhammad Moussa al-Musshewen, Kuwaiti.

The source said the two men were intending to put the explosive device in an area near the site of the explosion "but thanks to Almighty God they were killed by their criminal act.

AL-ANBA' Cited on U.S.-Iran Hostage Negotiations

LD1705140888 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0854 GMT 16 May 88

[Text] Kuwait, 16 May (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti AL-ANBA' said here today that U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John Whitehead had met during his recent visit to Algiers with an Iranian team and negotiated with them the release of the U.S. hostages in Lebanon and offered them in exchange the unblocking of the frozen Iranian assets in the United States, the lifting of the trade embargo, and the restoration of relations between the two countries. The paper attributed the report to some Palestinian sources, which it did not, however, disclose.

The Kuwaiti daily added: It is obvious that Washington has been swept by a wave of critics and pressures following the release of the French hostages last week and the fact that the administration has been critical, through a number of official statements, of the French Government's conduct.

It asserted: What confirms the information from the Palestinian sources is the fact that there are a number of indications of Washington's anxiety following the recent Iraqi military victories and the change in Baghdad's position from a defensive position to an offensive one...the Reagan Administration has repeatedly asserted that it does not want any side to win the Gulf war.

PDRY

YSP's Al-Bid Returns From Foreign Visits

EA1705110588 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 16 May 88

[Text] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the YSP Central Committee, returned to Aden this afternoon after leading a high-level party and government delegation to the Socialist Republic of Cuba, Nicaragua, and the People's Republic of Bulgaria. He was met at the airport by Brothers Salim Salih Muhammad, assistant secretary general and secretary of the Central Committee; Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Supreme People's Council Presidium; Dr Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Council of Ministers; and by other members of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee, and ministers.

In a statement to ANA the brother secretary general said: Our visit to the Republic of Cuba, Nicaragua, and people's Bulgaria was crowned with success. We held talks on a number of issues of common interest. We also signed a number of agreements and protocols that will strengthen the ties of friendship and expand cooperation between us and these countries.

We were very pleased with the generous hospitality and attention accorded us. We fully briefed the leaders of the countries we visited on the situation in our country and

the political, economic, and social tasks our party and people are struggling to perform. These tasks are being carried out according to the resolutions of the general party congress, with mass support for the YSP and our democratic national regime, with the sincere support of our friends and allies in the socialist countries, particularly the USSR, and also the paternal support of our brothers in the Arab countries.

We also (?briefed) the countries' leaders on the joint efforts of the leaders of the two parts of the homeland to normalize the situation in Yemen, and on the steps being taken toward achieving the reunification of Yemen by peaceful and democratic means. Our views were in accord concerning the dangers of the continuing Iraq-Iran war and the presence of foreign fleets in the Arab Gulf region, which pose a threat to the security, peace, and sovereignty of the peoples in the region.

We were also in agreement on the Palestinian question, the crux of the Middle East conflict. No just solution can be achieved until Israel desists from its hostile actions and until the rights of the Palestinian people to return, self-determination, and the establishment of their independent Palestinian state on their national soil under the PLO leadership, are guaranted.

We stressed solidarity with and support for the struggle of the African people to maintain their sovereignty and independent progress, and to combat racism and the apartheid regime in South Africa.

With regard to the international situation, we and the leaders of the countries we visited noted with satisfaction a new improvement in a new climate [as heard] the INF Treaty, and moves toward curbing strategic nuclear weapons in general at the upcoming Moscow summit. This improvement has come about thanks to Soviet policy and its concern, and that of the other peaceloving peoples of the world not to endanger life on earth.

We stressed with the leaders of these friendly countries that the U.S. Administration is responsible for the strained relations in Central America, particularly by its aggressive attitude toward Nicaragua.

The brother secretary general went on to say: We familiarized ourselves with many aspects of social construction in Cuba and Bulgaria in light of [words indistinct] and the political struggle being waged by the Sandinist Front in defense of national sovereignty and for the provision of peaceful conditions for future progress. We also saw examples of economic construction going on in these countries.

I am fully confident that these visits will have an important effect on deepening and developing comradely relations between our country and the countries we have visited. These relations will develop further in view of the common interests that we will pursue through practical and tangible means.

A joint communique on the visit of the brother secretary general and his delegation to people's Bulgaria will be broadcast at 2000 this evening over radio and the television.

Communique With Bulgaria

LD1705210988 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 May 88

[Text] Dear listeners, here is the joint communique issued on the visit of Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the YSP Central Committee, to the People's Republic of Bulgaria [PRB]:

In response to an invitation from Comrade Todor Zhivkov, general secretary of the BCP [Bulgarian Communist Party] Central Committee and chairman of the Council of State, Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the YSP Central Committee, paid an official friendly visit to Bulgaria at the head of a high-level party and government delegation from the PDRY during the period 12 to 16 May 1988.

The talks between the two leaders took place in a cordial atmosphere and in a spirit of comradely frankness and mutual understanding. During the talks, there was a full and constructive review of the state of and prospects for cooperation beween the YSP and the BCP. There was an exchange of views on relations between the PDRY and the PRB and on the current situation in Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, and other international issues.

Todor Zhivkov briefed his guest, 'Ali Salim al-Bid, on work being carried out in the PRB to implement the resolutions of the July party session and the January 1988 national party conference concerning the continuation of socialist construction in the country.

The YSP Central Committee secretary general expressed his high appreciation of the BCP's efforts to achieve a comprehensive reconstruction of economic and social life. He expressed his belief that the success of this policy would contribute very effectively to augmenting the strength of socialism, highlighting its strong points, and strengthening the struggle of progressive and democratic forces in the world.

'Ali Salim al-Bid briefed Todor Zhivkov on the economic and social achievements in Democratic Yemen and measures adopted to tackle the effects of the 13 January 1986 events. He also briefed him on work carried out in the country to implement the resolutions of the July 1987 general party conference in connection with charting a program for future development on the path of social progress, strengthening the leadership role of the YSP, and entrenching the country's socialist course.

He also reviewed the activities of the party and government as well as efforts being made to maintain security and stability in all parts of Yemen and to secure Yemeni unity through peaceful and democratic means.

Todor Zhivkov expressed his appreciation for the PDRY's successes in various fields and for the political and economic courses being pursued in both the internal and external arenas. He hailed its determination to continue to struggle for the success of social and eocnomic transformations and for the achievement of unity among the Yemeni people.

While discussing bilateral relations, the two sides expressed their satisfaction at the fruitful developments being witnessed by the PDRY and the PRB in the political, economic, cultural, and other fields. The two sides stressed that they would strive to strengthen and expand this cooperation on the basis of the Friendship and Cooperation Treaty signed on 11 November 1981.

The two sides referred to the nature and increasing importance of the cordial relations linking the YSP and BCP and called for their advancement on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

The two sides stressed the great importance attached to meetings between the leaders of the two countries in the context of developing bilateral relations. The two sides agreed on the need to continue this tradition of holding meetings and consultations at the summit level and other levels.

During their review of the current international situation, 'Ali Salim al-Bid and Todor Zhivkov expressed their high appreciation for the results of the initiatives taken by the USSR and the other socialist countries that will contribute to entrenching a new spirit of political thinking in the international arena.

The two leaders stressed that the INF Treaty concluded between the USSR and the United States is of historic significance. They also regard the imminent meeting in Moscow between Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and Ronald Reagan, U.S. President, on achieving progress toward building a world free of weapons of mass annihilation, as very important.

Exchanging views on the European situation, the two sides expressed their support for the European operation [al-amaliyah al-urubbiyah] and the need to give it new political momentum on the basis of the proposal advanced in the appeal to NATO and European countries, which was approved at the Warsaw Pact foreign ministers' meeting in Sofia.

'Ali Salim al-Bid gave a high evaluation of the PRB's contribution to the European process and of its policy aimed at fostering an atmosphere of peace, mutual trust, and cooperation in the Balkans and at transforming the area into a chemical and nuclear weapon-free area.

The PDRY and the PRB expressed their solidarity with the impassioned popular uprising and the steadfast struggle of the Palestinian people for their national liberation under the leadership of their sole legitimate representative, the PLO. They vehemently condemned the repressive measures and terrorism being exercised by the Israeli authorities against peaceful residents of the occupied Arab territories, as well as the Israeli state terrorism against the sovereignty of other states. The two sides stated that the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Arab territories and the securing of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of a national independent state, are essential conditions for a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East dispute.

They emphasized that convening an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations and supervised by the permanent member states of the UN Security Council, with the equal participation of all concerned parties, including the PLO, would be an effective mechanism for the settlement of the Middle East problem.

On the Lebanese situation, the two sides supported the struggle of the Lebanese people and national forces to liberate southern Lebanon from Israeli occupation. They demanded the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces in compliance with the UN Security Council's resolutions in order to safeguard Lebanon's unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

The two countries expressed their deep concern about the continuing Iran-Iraq dispute. The two sides called for intensified international efforts to bring about the immediate implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 598. They commended the significant role played by the United Nations and its secretary general in seeking a settlement to this dispute.

Reference was also made to the very large presence of NATO naval units in the Arab Gulf, which would only lead to an escalation of tension and confusion of the situation in the area and would increase the danger of a widening of the range of military operations and the involvement of third party states. All of this creates extra obstacles to the settlement of the Iran-Iraq dispute. They stressed the need for the withdrawal of naval forces from the Arab Gulf to preserve the Indian Ocean as an area free of naval forces and nuclear weapons.

The PDRY and PRB praised the signing of the Geneva accords calling for a political settlement of the Afghan question. They gave a high valuation of the constructive

positions of the USSR and Afghan Governments and referred to the realistic political viewpoint of all participants in the Afghan settlement.

The two sides stressed their solidarity with the struggle of African peoples aimed at the eradication of colonialism in its old and modern forms, racial segregation, and the apartheid system. In this connection, they expressed their support for the struggle of the South African nationalists under the leadership of the ANC [African National Congress] and the just struggle of the people of Namibia for independence under the leadership of SWAPO [South-West African People's Organization].

The two sides also stressed the importance of furthering the role of the Nonaligned Movement and its contribution to the struggle against nuclear disaster, peacekeeping, and the elimination of tension and dangerous confrontation. The two sides paid special attention to international relations and the problem of developing countries' foreign debt. They pointed to the direct relationship between disarmament and development and stated their conviction that disarmament and the reduction of military expenditure would bring about objective conditions for directing material resources toward solving the most acute economic and social problems of the developing countries.

The YSP and BCP stressed their position on the need for a reconstruction of the international economic order and the establishment of a new and just global economic order.

The two sides gave a high evaluation of the visit made by Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid to the PRB. They expressed their conviction that it would contribute to the further strengthening of the friendship and useful cooperation between the two friendly countries in every field in a manner that would promote global peace, security, and social progress.

The secretary general of the YSP Central Committee expressed his thanks to the Bulgarian people and their leaders for the warm and generous reception accorded to him and his accompanying delegation in the PRB. An invitation was given to Todor Khristov Zhivkov, general secretary of the Central Committee of the BCP and chairman of the State Council, to visit the PDRY. The invitation was accepted with gratitude and the date of the visit will be determined later.

Reference was also made to the very large presence of NATO naval units in the Arab Gulf, which would only lead to an escalation of tension and confusion of the situation in the area and would increase the danger of a widening of the range of military operations and the involvement of third party states. All of this creates extra obstacles to the settlement of the Iran-Iraq dispute. They stressed the need for the withdrawal of naval forces from the Arab Gulf to preserve the Indian Ocean as an area free of naval forces and nuclear weapons.

The PDRY and PRB praised the signing of the Geneva accords calling for a political settlement of the Afghan question. They gave a high valuation of the constructive positions of the USSR and Afghan Governments and referred to the realistic political viewpoint of all participants in the Afghan settlement.

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Further on Visit to Bulgaria

For reportage on the visit by 'Ali Salim al-Bid and his accompanying delegation to Bulgaria, and his talks with Todor Zhivkov and other officials, see the Bulgarian section in the 17 May Eastern Europe DAILY REPORT.

Culture Minister Holds Talks in Soviet Union

LD1305214388 Aden ANA in Arabic 1145 GMT 13 May 88

[Text] Moscow, 12 May (ANA)—A Soviet delegation will come to Aden toward the end of this month to discuss Soviet assistance in the field of radio and television. This was disclosed during a meeting which took place yesterday evening in Moscow between Comrade Dr Muhammad Ahmad Jarhum, member of the Central Committee and minister for culture and information, and Comrade Baryakhin [name as received], deputy chairman of the USSR State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting. Relations between the two friendly countries in the field of TV and radio broadcasting were reviewed during the meeting.

Saudi Arabia

AL-YAWM Says U.S. Veto Supports 'Israeli Crimes'

JN1605082888 Al-Dammam AL-YAWM in Arabic 12 May 88 p 5

[Editorial: "Israel's Veto"]

[Text] In the wake of the bitter and different Arab experiments with the United States, it is no wonder to see Washington vetoing any Arab complaint against Israel, as it did the day before yesterday. The U.S. veto has become an Israeli one and is not used by Tel Aviv for the benefit of the American people or Washington's other allies. By allowing this to happen, Washington has completely turned its back on the Arabs. It is neither ready to consider any Arab initiative nor to listen to any Arab.

The recent U.S. veto against world condemnation of Israeli piracy can only be justified by the fact that Washington has devoted the veto to protect Israeli crimes from world ethical condemnation. As long as Israel enjoys the protection of this veto for its arrogance and continuous aggressions, it will continue its crimes.

If Washington protects the Zionist gangs and their crimes from world justice, we do not rule out U.S. involvement in the Israeli acts, particularly since accusations have been reiterated charging the United States with taking part in the assassination of the Palestinian leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. U.S. behavior supporting Israeli crimes makes the friends of the United States always few in number and a target of bargaining or even public sale, as is the case now when Washington rejects the opinions of many Arab countries and listens to persons in Tel Aviv whom it knows to be killers. It then supports their hostile stands and turns its back on human justice without shame or regret.

The successive U.S. stands call on the Arabs to fully depend on themselves to seize their rights. The Arabs should realize that if they do not succeed in this, then Washington or any other capital, the veto, the Security Council, and the United Nations will do them no good.

Yemen Arab Republic

Al-'Attas Holds Talks With Soviet Officials

For Soviet and YAR reportage on Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-'Attas' visit to Moscow and talks there with Soviet officials, including Petr Demichev, alternate Politburo member, and Anatoliy Dobrynin, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, see the Near East & South Asia section of the 18 May Soviet Union DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Peres Terms 'Awwad 'Legitimate Representative'
TA1905115888 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 May 88 p 1

[Report by U.S. correspondent Tzvi Bar'el]

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres is ready to accept Mubarak 'Awwad as a legitimate Palestinian representative in a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to peace talks. Peres told HA'ARETZ that he is prepared to regard 'Awwad as a legitimate representative for such a purpose if 'Awwad is not a member of the PLO. Peres declined to say whether he support's 'Awwad's deportation, saying the matter was in the courts, but added, "We have always said we will not censor ideas, only stones and weapons."

Peres Sees 'Real Change' in Soviet Position
TA1905050988 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 19 May 88

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, now in New York after talks in Washington, says he sees a real change in the Soviet position on an international peace conference. The foreign minister was speaking to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in the United States. Judy Lessing reports from New York:

[Begin recording] [Lessing] Mr Peres said that when he met Ambassador Dubinin in Washington he listened to a reading of a written statement of the Soviet position which now does not refer to an authoritative international peace conference.

[Peres] The statement he has read to us started by saying that Russia is flexible, something that we knew all the time, but this time it was stated in writing. There is new thinking in the Soviet Union. Nothing they are saying is a matter of take it or leave it. It's not a condition, it's a proposal. They are listening to us, and we agree to listen to them. I mean it had a Western silver lining when we listened to this declaration. It was a written declaration, and we are now analyzing it very carefully.

[Lessing] The foreign minister said he would never want to see Israel dependent on the assurances of other countries, and he would never go to any conference and hand over the right of Israel's own judgment to somebody else. He rejected the view that the Russians would be able to put pressure on Israel. Why would Israel be intimidated? he asked. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0400 GMT on 19 May adds that "Foreign Minister Peres received promises that the Soviet authorities will allow 1,400 Jews to leave the Soviet Union this month. He said he also heard that those refused immigration for state security reasons will receive exit visas."]

Asked at the presidents' conference last night for his assessment of the White House statement, Foreign Minister Peres had this to say.

[Begin recording] But I can say that I wouldn't like to see the United States getting itself involved in our politics, and I can assure you that we shall not get involved in your politics. You will elect your leaders, we shall elect our leaders, and hopefully we shall develop good relations with the people that will be elected by our people. [applause] [end recording]

Rabin Says Infiltrations Inflame 'Waning' Unrest
TA1805122288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The defense minister said the infiltrations from Egypt and Jordan in recent months, including last night's attempt, reflect the terrorists' desire to attack us and do not show any change in policy by our two neighbors.

The minister told our correspondent Karmela Menashe that the terrorist organizations are trying to increase terrorist actions in order to inflame the waning demonstrations in the territories. The defense minister said the terrorist captured yesterday in the Bet She'an Valley had a revolver and a mine, and that the aim of the band was to carry out an attack.

Rabin: Territories Violence in 'Constant Decline'
TA1805191588 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1605 GMT 18 May 88

[Interview with Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe, during a tour of Gaza on 18 May—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Menashe] The defense minister toured Gaza today and emphasized that the latest infiltration attempts do not denote a change in the policy of Egypt and Jordan.

[Rabin] The infiltrations of the past 5 months from the Egyptian and Jordanian borders, including last night's infiltration from Jordan, indicate the desire of PLO terrorist elements to hurt us. In no way do they show a change of any kind in the Jordanian or Egyptian policy of preventing them. I believe that the borders, definitely the Egyptian and Jordanian ones, are safe within the limits of the Israeli-Arab conflict, although here and there a squad might try to infiltrate to carry out attacks.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 1700 GMT on 18 May carries an interview with Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. On the infiltrations he says: "No doubt, in my mind at least, that the authorities in Egypt and Jordan are doing, sometimes, not everything that can be done to prevent it."]

[Menashe] Do you see any connection between this latest attempt and recent terrorist attacks and the IDF operation in the north?

[Rabin] I believe that PLO elements abroad feel there is a decline in the violent activity in the territories, in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. They feel that most of their instructions, such as staging memorial days or major activities, are not carried out, due to IDF activity, detentions, and administrative measures. I am certain that to give a push to what they see as the beginning of a waning in the violence, they encourage and increase terrorism, first and foremost from the outside. [passage omitted]

[Menashe] Minister Rabin said that today's riots do not resemble those of 2 or 3 months ago.

[Rabin] My impression is that the violence in the territories is in a process of constant decline. This does not mean that there could not one day be a sudden increase of 2, 3, or 4 incidents more than the average. The trend should be viewed not in the context of 1 or 2 days and not even a week, but as a process. I see the waning violence as one of the IDF's greatest and most important achievements.

[Menashe] Minister Rabin was later asked about talking to the local population in view of the subsiding violence. I think officers throughout the area talk to the local population, Rabin said.

[Rabin] I know that part of the population is tired by now, and suffers from the violence as well as from the steps we are forced to take. They are told that if calm is reached we would take our revenge. Our aim is to attain calm for the population's sake. Should the population prove they can maintain quiet for 3 or 5 months, I believe they would be rewarded not in the political sense, but in everything that has to do with improving their standard of living.

Shamir Attempts To 'Cool' Political Debate

TA1805163688 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1600 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] There is no need to react to yesterday's White House statement which lavished praise on Foreign Minister Peres and leveled indirect criticism at the prime minister. These remarks were made today by Yitzhaq Shamir in the Likud ministers meeting. Our political affairs correspondent 'Oz Frankel reports:

[Begin recording] Yitzhaq Shamir wishes to cool the political debate prompted by the harsh statement issued by the White House. The prime minister's office no longer denies that the criticism was aimed at Mr Shamir, but the prime minister said a short while ago in the Likud ministers meeting: No need to start a debate with the United States now.

After the meeting he talked with his deputy David Levi, who reiterated his proposal, previously made to the media, to recall Peres at once. Shamir told him, too, that there is no need to attach too much importance to the White House statement, and that the issue must be struck from the agenda. [end recording]

Qatzav Blames Peres for Reagan Statement

TA1805122788 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The Inner Cabinet has discussed the incident near the Qalandiyah refugee camp in which a person was shot after he slapped an IDF officer. The defense minister said he would provide full details on the incident at the Inner Cabinet's next meeting.

Our correspondent Gi'ad Sher reports that Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i asked: How is it possible for Minister Peres to remain neutral when President Reagan denounces the prime minister? Minister Moda'i raised the possibility that the President's remarks on those opposed to peace were coordinated between Minister Peres and President Reagan.

Minister Moshe Qatzav said this morning that if President Reagan's remarks were aimed against Israel, then Minister Peres was responsible for this lamentable declaration.

Beilin on Moscow Commentary, Peres-Reagan Talks

TA1905063388 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 19 May 88

[Telephone interview with Yosi Beilin, political director general of the Foreign Ministry by Arye Golan; place not specified—live]

[Excerpt] [Golan] We have Dr Yosi Beilin, the political director general of the Foreign Ministry, on the telephone. Good morning.

[Beilin] Good morning.

[Golan] First of all, do you have any explanation for the surprising attack by the Radio Moscow commentator on Shim'on Peres so soon after Minister Peres' talks with the Soviet ambassador in Washington?

[Beilin] It does not surprise me. Whoever listens to Moscow Radio knows there is continuous criticism of Israel's positions on the international conference and other issues as presented by Mr Peres. Nobody actually believes there is agreement with the Soviets on these positions. This is additional proof that the Soviet position is different from our position. I do not think it surprises anybody, and it is certainly not the first such commentary. They have criticized Mr Peres' policy many times.

[Golan] In contrast to that criticism, we have heard about the praise Mr Peres received from President Reagan and the criticism the U.S. President leveled on leaders who oppose peace. In the Likud there are charges that it was Mr Peres who incited President Reagan to make this announcement. You were present at the meeting between the two at the White House.

[Beilin] I was present at the meeting.

[Golan] Is there any basis for the charges according to the protocol of the meeting?

[Beilin] Look, I would say this a joke. Of course Mr Peres was not involved in the announcement which was prepared before the meeting and read by the spokesman afterward. We know how things are done at such events. This is neither the first nor the last time it has been done. Such announcements are usually prepared beforehand and are used after the meetings. Furthermore, I do not believe that those who are criticizing Mr Peres are ignorant of how things are done. My concern is that internal political and inter-party struggles might harm the nation's most important asset, and perhaps one of the few we have, which is our relations with the United States. This is the danger.

[Golan] In the talks between Mr Peres and the U.S. President did Mr Shamir's policy, his refusal to accept the Shultz initiative, come up at all?

[Beilin] No, not at all. According to the charge, President Reagan's announcement was read to Mr Peres, and he did not react to the sharp attack on Mr Shamir. It is obvious that the situation was completely different. After the meeting there was an announcement which was not previously read to any members of Peres' entourage or Peres himself. It was read by the spokesman and Shamir's name was not mentioned. It referred to all those who oppose a peace settlement in the region. I think that only the particular individual can define himself in this context. That is, since no names were mentioned, anybody in the region who declares he opposes peace can say it is aimed at him. [passage omitted]

Visa Restrictions To Be Imposed on Soviet Jews

TA1905073988 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The prime minister's office confirms that a decision in principle has been made to prohibit the granting of Israeli visas to Jews who want to leave the USSR but do not plan to come to Israel. Our correspondent Avraham Ben-Melekh reports that there was no debate in the full cabinet, and that the decision was taken in consultations between the prime minister and the vice prime minister.

The prime minister's office said the Foreign Ministry is responsible for implementing the decision.

Peres on Relations With Soviets, U.S., Unrest

PM1805160888 Barcelona LA VANGUARDIA in Spanish 12 May 88 p 3

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Luis Foix; date, place not given]

[Text] [Foix] How does Israel feel on its 40th anniversary?

[Peres] We have the feeling of having accomplished something very important and are satisfied. We have succeeded in many fields—many more than we dreamed of. What we have accomplished is unprecedented in history. In fact, the Jewish people are the only people to have succeeded in coming together again in a state after a 2,000-year interruption. They have returned to their land. They have recovered their language. They have built a powerful industry, caused modern agriculture to flourish, have a good education system and an independent judicial system, and have won all the wars. Despite the danger to which we are constantly subjected, we have never renounced the idea of freedom. We have problems. Certainly, the most important problem is the resolution of the Palestinian conflict and achieving peace with the rest of our neighbors.

[Foix] Would you agree with David Ben-Gurion's premonition, when he said that Israel would be a "light for the nations"—an idea, a mission, a vision?

[Peres] Yes. I believe that it is still one of our greatest ambitions. I believe that we must achieve peace and that we must turn fire into light.

[Foix] So would you also accept the words of Hayim Weizman—your country's first president—when he said in 1949 that "I am certain that the world will judge the Jewish state by what it does with the Arabs"? What do you say to this?

[Peres] I agree. We want to find a solution. We do not want to find it through coercion or threats, but what I can tell you is that we are not attempting to dominate the Arabs. We really wish to live in peace together with them.

[Foix] Yes, but the fact is that over the past 6 months the Israeli Army's conduct in the occupied territories has been extremely tough and bloody.

[Peres] Giving birth to peace, like giving birth to a living being, involves a great deal of pain and suffering. But I hope that we will give birth to peace.

Rapprochement With Moscow

[Foix] Do you find it difficult to put forward a comprehensive policy to secure peace while being a member of a government which is sharply divided over how to secure it?

[Peres] Yes, it is very difficult.

[Foix] Why?

[Peres] We are indeed divided and cannot make a decision at present. But this decision is necessary and urgent for the progress of peace.

[Foix] So you do not expect a decision until the next election is held in November?

[Peres] We will attempt to make one, because the strange thing is that on some points over which we are divided we are also in a position to find a majority which would enable us to make decisions. So we will attempt to do so, although there are many difficulties. That is, we will attempt to do so again, but I must admit that the prospects are not very encouraging.

[Foix] Are the visit which you have just paid to Hungary and the Soviet personalities with whom you are going to meet in Madrid to be interpreted as signs that you are attempting to bring the Soviet Union into the Middle East peace process?

[Peres] Yes, indeed. I can see no reason for being opposed to the Soviet Union, nor are there grounds for the Soviets to be opposed to us. We judge the Soviet Union not in itself but by its policy. It must not be forgotten that the Soviet Union of Stalin's day supported the idea of the creation of the state of Israel. And we are sincerely grateful. There were other times when Moscow supplied arms to our neighbors, and then we deplored this and criticized it considerably. If the Soviets invade Afghanistan, we attack that move, but when they also leave, we are glad. So we are following very closely the Soviet Union's policy, which has nothing to do with that country's strength and international role. Objectively, we can be friends and can improve our relations.

[Foix] How far have the contacts gone? Minister Shevardnadze is going to visit the Middle East during the next few months. Could a date be set for the restoration of the relations severed in the summer of 1967?

[Peres] What I can say is that a giant like the Soviet Union could have taken more rapid and decisive steps. They are very slow.

[Foix] What do you say about relations with Jordan in the light of the proposals in George Shultz' peace plan? What is the state of relations with your neighbors at present, following the incidents in the occupied territories?

[Peres] The problem is that nobody has said "no" to Shultz' initiative, but neither has anybody said "yes." What Shultz' plan needs is for those most directly concerned to accept it, even if only in principle, so that they can talk later and find a solution. And this has not yet happened.

[Foix] But do you believe that this situation can be unblocked before the November election?

[Peres] All that I will tell you is that we will really attempt to do so.

Army's Position

[Foix] Do you still believe that the Israeli Army is the country's cornerstone?

[Peres] If you mean the cornerstone with respect to Israel's security, my answer is "yes." If you look at history and examine what has happened to the Jewish people in this century, you will understand it immediately. Following the holocaust of World War II, following 5 wars since the modern state of Israel came into being, it is not surprising that the Jewish people wish to have an army to defend their lives and their existence. In this sense I believe that the army is an essential body for Israel.

[Foix] Do you believe that the way in which the clashes in Gaza and on the West Bank have developed, with an army which has had to confront an enemy which is not its natural enemy—young people and women throwing stones—do you believe that this situation has demoralized the troops?

[Peres] The army did not seek this situation. No country and no armed forces would like to undergo this very painful experience. But an army cannot choose the tasks which it must perform. There has been no alternative to what the army has had to do in order to achieve security and peace for all the sides involved, both for the Jews and for the Arabs. In the last analysis, the troops have obeyed the orders given to them by their superiors.

[Foix] Would you agree that the events of the past few months have weakened Israel's position in the world, bearing in mind the idea of Israel as a democratic country and as a new social reality which came into being in 1949 and captivated many Westerners? Do you not believe that in the light of what has happened it is now very difficult to recover that image of a progressive and advanced country which was steering a new political, economic, and social course?

[Peres] Yes. The truth is that our position has been weakened worldwide. This is largely because we have given the television companies and the press in general freedom to witness the events directly. So I do not know whether the reaction which has occurred in the world is fair. But in any event I admit this painful fact of impairment of our image. But the only way to recover a balanced position is to resume the peace negotiations. And this is what we are doing. We cannot change the situation on the streets of Gaza and the West Bank simply by believing that the violence will end on its own. What must be done is to seek negotiations at the highest level at which to attempt to examine and correct the underlying causes of those clashes. We cannot negotiate by starting from the problems' results. It is necessary to tackle their causes.

[Foix] Could you cite three of these causes?

[Peres] First, there is widespread frustration in the occupied territories because there are no prospects of progress. We have not been able to give hope. This is the number one factor. The second factor is that there is great fear and suspicion focused on the current circumstances, and it is very difficult to find agreed solutions. And the third factor is the way in which the Palestinians are led, in the sense that they have no clear and well-defined leadership. The PLO may have a flag, but what is does not have is a blueprint or even a plan for making peace with us.

[Foix] How do you judge Abu Jihad's [Khalil al-Wazir] murder in Tunis by a commando which received instructions from the Jerusalem government of which you are a member?

[Peres] I do not wish to comment on this matter.

Middle East

[Foix] Do you believe that if George Bush becomes the U.S. President, U.S. policy on the Middle East in general and Israel in particular will change much?

[Peres] I believe that whoever the next U.S. President is, friendship with Israel will remain one of the unchanging elements of U.S. foreign policy. I have often told George Shultz that our relations are quite unusual, because when Israel is attacked we do not ask for U.S. troops, but when Israel seeks peace we ask for U.S. diplomats. What Washington always deploys in Israel is not its troops but diplomacy.

[Foix] But it has been said that a presidency under George Bush, whose relations with the Arab states are stronger and better organized than those of any other U.S. President so far, could tip the balance somewhat, harming Israel.

[Peres] I would not take much notice of all this, and I certainly would not place much trust in media speculation. I would rather wait for events to take place. I would judge U.S. presidents by what they have done and not by what they are going to do. In any event, I believe that the reports which have spoken of this hypothetical stance by Bush are, at the very least, speculative.

[Foix] There has also been speculation that Shultz has been organizing these visits to the Middle East—he will pay the fourth in June—with an unsuccessful peace plan, and what he is actually doing is electioneering among the Israeli people in order to induce the majority of them to vote for your party in the November election and thus be able to have a valid interlocutor with whom to negotiate, and not be exposed to Shamir's intransigence.

[Peres] This is also speculation. In any event, the election is still far off, and it is a matter the Israelis themselves will have to decide.

Soviets Would React to 'Progress' in Mideast Peace

TA1805161588 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 May 88 p 3

[Report by Yerah Tal]

[Text] "Say yes to the international conference and within 15 minutes we will restore diplomatic relations," Vasiliy Osnach said yesterday. Osnach, guest of the Israeli-Soviet Friendship Association, is a member of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee, and head of the Soviet delegation visiting Israel on the occasion of the 43d anniversary of the victory over the Nazis.

Addressing a reception given for the delegation by Haifa Mayor Arye Gurel, Osnach said that "The Soviet people harbor no feelings of hostility or alienation toward the Israelis, not even toward those who were once citizens of the USSR. The Soviets do feel, however, that not all the causes that led to the break in relations between our countries in 1967 have been eliminated."

"The Soviets are awaiting a shift on the part of Israel and its ally, the United States," he said. "In solving the Afghan problem the USSR offered an example of how regional conflicts can be solved through international relations. The Middle East problem is probably more complicated, perhaps the most complicated of all regional conflicts, but its solution must also be approached by peaceful means. If it feels that progress is being made toward this end, the USSR would react accordingly."

FRG's Jenninger Praises Bilateral Relations

TA1605154488 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 16 May 88

[Text] Philipp Jenninger, president of the FRG Bundestag, has said that true friendship is tested in difficult periods. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that Mr Jenninger said this in a meeting with Acting-Foreign Minister 'Ezer Weizman. During the meeting Weizman briefed Jenninger on the political process in the Middle East, Israel's contacts with the Eastern bloc, and the rise of fundamentalism in the Arab countries. The Bundestag president has come to Israel as the guest of the Knesset.

Defense Official on 'Secret' Trip to Switzerland

TA1905065388 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 19 May 88

[Excerpt] Deputy Defense Minister Mikha'el Deqel left for Switzerland on Tuesday. The trip was kept a secret. Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe learned about the visit. Here she is with the details:

Deputy Defense Minister Mikha'el Deqel's visit was decided on several weeks ago. No official announcement was made. The aim of the visit is apparently to deal with defense issues linked to his activities. Mikha'el Deqel was invited by Swiss defense officials. The visit will last a week.

It has been learned that during his stay the deputy defense minister will concentrate on one of the defense issues on which the Swiss have a lot of experience and know-how. Israel wants to buy this know-how. In the past few years Israel and Switzerland have set up a wide range of defense links. Switzerland purchased several systems and defense products from Israel. [passage omitted]

Journalists Members of 'Hostile Organization'
TA1905142788 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The Tel Aviv District Court today determined that there is evidence that the activity of DEREKH HANITZOTZ [THE WAY OF THE SPARK] editors was detrimental to state security and that they were members of a hostile organization. This is the first time a court decision on this issue has been released.

Justice Arye Even-Ari remanded editors Mikhal Schwartz, Hadas Lahav, Roni Ben-Efrat, and Ya'aqov Ben-Efrat in custody. He said that some of the appellants fully admitted the charges, tying themselves and their colleagues to the criminal conspiracy. Part of them, said the judge, later recanted their admissions.

Meanwhile, another newspaper employee, Asaf Adiv, was remanded in custody for 10 more days.

Ramallah Detention Camp for Palestinians Closed
TA1805164088 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The IDF today closed down the 'Ofer detention camp in the Ramallah area. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the camp had been established about 3 months ago at the height of the riots. Hundreds of inhabitants of the territories had been held there.

Editorial Analyzes Peace Process 'Rejectionism'
TA1905071088 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 May 88 p 8

[Editorial: "Who's a Rejectionist?"]

[Text] Rejectionism, in the sense of a studied rejection of genuine peacemaking, is a bad word in the vocabulary of the American-Israeli discourse. But it is yet to be clearly enough defined so as to permit authoritative identification of those Middle East political leaders who are truly rejectionists. The lack of clarity is responsible for the discombobulation triggered in Israel by the White House statement put out this week after a meeting between President Ronald Reagan and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

Mr. Reagan's spokesman did make it clear that, in the president's view, the reproachful term "rejectionist" does not fit Mr. Peres. On the contrary, the Labour Party chairman was lauded as a person who is "creative and has the courage and wisdom to say yes when real opportunities arise," for peace that is. But unlike Mr. Peres, the White House said, there are leaders who "are negative, consistently reject new ideas, fail to exploit realistic opportunities to bring about negotiations, and make progress impossible."

"In the end," the statement observed, "they will have to answer to their own people for the suffering that will inevitably result."

Who in the world could "they" be? The language was vaguely familiar: It recalled the remarks made, on the White House lawn, by Mr. Reagan while bidding his then Israeli visitor, Premier Yitzhaq Shamir, farewell almost exactly two months ago. Those Middle East leaders who would say "no" to the U.S.—meaning the Shultz plan for Middle East peace—the president warned, would need to "answer to themselves and to their own people as to why they turned down a realistic and sensible plan to achieve negotiations."

Whether or not that verbal stiletto was meant for Mr. Shamir, too, among others, Mr. Reagan made a point of noting that the premier had not actually used that word, "no."

Two months later Mr. Shamir has still not used that specific word. In the absence of an explicit signal from Washington that the accumulated weight of his recent statements on the subject nevertheless amounted to one big "no," the premier's media adviser was entitled to suggest, however whimsically, that Mr. Shamir was not the target. And that the White House statement "could have been aimed only at those Arab leaders who have consistently refused to come to the peace table with Israel."

This, it seems, is how Mr. Shamir is hoping to avoid a confrontation with the U.S. on the eve of an Israeli general election.

If Mr. Reagan was still not willing to specifically name Mr. Shamir a rejectionist, not even after the premier recently himself expressed willingness to wear that "crown of thorns," then surely there was no reason for the premier to put a "hostile" construction on the White House statement. Let it rather be pretended that the president had in mind only such leaders as the bellicose Hafiz al-Asad and the cowardly King Husayn.

However Mr. Shamir's own party does not believe this pretence. Supporters and rivals alike, inside Herut, rushed to defend him against what they described as a Peres-engineered U.S. libel. They excitedly advanced the theory that, while the voice that had in effect labelled the premier a rejectionist had been Mr. Reagan's, the word itself had been dictated by that latter-day Ahitofel,

[Biblical reference to counselor of Absalom whose controversial advice went unheeded] Shim'on Peres. In the election campaign, then, Herut will trace America's incipient "perfidy" back to Alignment "treachery."

More than a few Israeli voters will fall for this convenient argument even if Washington denies it. But a great many more will do so if the lame-duck U.S. administration keeps sabotaging its own peacemaking by its own ambivalence and indecision.

Leaders' 'Perception' of Unrest Questioned

TA1705183488 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 May 88 p 13

[Commentary by Dan Margalit: "The People of the Empty Promise"]

[Text] All it takes are several days and fewer disturbances for Israeli politicians to quickly assure the tiring public that the intifadha [uprising] is weakening. It is so nice, being a man of good tidings, to say, as Yitzhaq Shamir says, that the situation in the territories "is calming down, returning to normal;" or to say the same thing using more cautious language as Shim'on Peres did in the United States; or to embrace the assessment of Chief of Staff Shomron that the IDF can maintain the territories at the present level of friction; or to evince calmness with Shmu'el Goren, the coordinator of activities in the territories, whose message is "business as usual."

Do we have a return to normal life here? Do 3,000 policemen on full alert following Ramadan and Jerusalem Day indicate a normal life? Do a casualty and a couple of wounded Arabs every few days indicate a normal life? What about the Friday riots on Temple Mount? Herut veterans are fond of recalling the 1929 incidents that began with Arab riots near the Western Wall. History books are full of descriptions from those days, but those violent demonstrations were mild compared to what is happening now.

We have a group of politicians here who presumptively lowered expectations by saying they would not be able to return the previous calm and therefore would settle for decreasing the level of the intifadha to small-scale terrorism. We are dealing with a leadership that is constantly being reminded by senior army officers that there has been a substantial decrease in the regular army's level of training, and that the alarming increase in the reserve force may serve as a catalyst for encouraging emigration.

Jerusalem Day was celebrated yesterday with melancholy. Shops were closed and tourists avoided the markets. Many people recalled the good old Saturdays with traffic jams opposite Damascus Gate. The leaders of the Likud and Alignment urgently need a rosy-colored makeup to give Jerusalem a more festive look, not only to remember the good old days fondly, but also to inaugurate and conduct the election season with optimism.

If the politicians want to depict the situation in this light, they will have to pay the bill. During the 5 months of the uprising, Peres, Rabin, and even Shamir promised that there was a timetable for political negotiations. Israel will not conduct negotiations under the threat of the intifadha. After it quells the Arab riots, however, the government will offer its hand in peace. According to the ministers' analysis of the intifadha, the long-awaited moment has arrived.

There are no signs, however, that this is happening. Shamir is in the midst of a campaign that shows him becoming more extreme. As the uprising weakens, he visits the settlements and Merkaz Harav yeshiva [the main Gush Emunim yeshiva] students more, and makes statements advocating a de facto annexation of the territories, something he conceals when disturbances are peaking or during visits by Shultz.

Why is this happening? If the IDF has indeed overcome the opposition and curbed Palestinian violence to the tolerable level Rabin promised, why in their speeches do Shamir and Peres not stress finding partners to negotiations? If there is calm, the government has to start implementing the second stage promised by the ministers. It could do this by trying to renew the dialogue with Sari Nusaybah and Hanna Sinyurah, or begin a dialogue with Mubarak 'Awwad, who is apparently involved in publishing uprising pamphlets. I am not talking about or hoping for more far-reaching steps in an election year.

All of the above is called for on the basis of the countless speeches heaped on the public by Alignment and Likud leaders as a result of what the public has seen since 9 December. It is also called for as a result of the leaders' perception of the present situation. This is not happening because they never intended to pay their bill. They never intended to begin negotiations once the stones and clubs fell into disuse.

Soviets Should Pay 'Price' of Diplomatic Relations

TA1505115188 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 15 May 88 p 7

[Editorial: "Government or Party"]

[Excerpt] If Israel's foreign policy focused on the Soviet Union last week, then today begins the American week. The term "foreign policy" may be misleading as it refers to the policy of the foreign minister. After all, the prime minister has a different, and occasionally also contradictory, policy.

Strangers can only look on in wonder at the bizarre spectacle of two state leaders fighting over visits to important or new countries, or meetings with prominent world figures. As far as Yitzhaq Shamir is concerned, their consent to meet with him is the sole purpose of the entire exercise because he cannot promise to soften his

position in exchange unless the idea is to intimate that after the elections he will be able to make far more generous concessions than his rival.

The Soviets and their East European allies went to great lengths last week to highlight Shim'on Peres' position as head of the Labor Party, both during his visit in Hungary and by having him confer in Madrid with the CPSU rather than government officials. Of course, this is an artificial distinction which enables the Soviets to keep up the pretense of a lack of relations for the sake of the Arabs, and at the same time get to know (one half) of the Israeli position. It would be advisable, however, to prevent the Soviets from making do indefinitely with such channels of communications and with meetings with representatives of the U.S. Jewish community. Through such meetings the Soviets give the impression of having a relationship with Israel, without paying the price of resuming diplomatic relations.

So far, Soviet intransigence has managed to thwart George Shultz' initiative. If the Soviets relent, Syria and Jordan will probably follow in their footsteps, making it hard on Shamir to remain the last of the nay-sayers. The timing of Peres' talks in Washington is consequently propitious, assuming that in the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in 2 weeks the two superpower leaders agree on an outline for making progress in the Middle East, particularly if their hopes to make additional progress on the nuclear arms limitations vanish into thin air. [passage omitted]

Commentary Sees Soviets 'Mellowing' Toward Jews

TA1705183188 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
17 May 88 p A14

[Commentary by Moshe Zaq: "Messages from Moscow"—passages in boldface as published]

[Text] The messages brought back from Moscow by Edgar Bronfman, World Jewish Congress president, were encouraging:

The Soviet Union has asked the mayor of Moscow to allot a building for the capital's Jewish cultural center.

The Soviet Union has invited the Jewish Congress to participate in joint enterprises, both religious and cultural, in its country.

The establishment of private Hebrew schools will be permitted.

The Soviet attorney general has promised to reexamine the files of refuseniks whose emigration was delayed due to security considerations.

The Jewish Congress leaders rejoiced at the "Jewish spring" in Moscow, but the local Jewish activists did not. They worry that Gorbachev could be deposed, and that post-Gorbachev reaction would place the Jews in a worse situation. The activists, therefore, urge the Jewish organizations to increase their efforts to get them out immediately, before the exit gates are locked for good.

The Soviet willingness to conduct negotiations with the Jewish Congress in Moscow signals a mellowing toward the Jews. On the eve of the Reagan-Gorbachev Moscow summit, the Soviet Union needed a certain amount of cosmetic treatment on the human rights issue. The time was also right for a change in the Soviet attitude toward Israel, but it was wasted on the pursuit of empty formulas over the international conference procedure. Instead of discussing **content**, Israel rushed to discuss **procedure**, which resulted in the Soviets toying with Israel. They promised for the hundredth time that the conference would have no coercive authority, avoided mentioning the PLO explicitly in the preliminary talks, and created a situation where the resumption of diplomatic ties ceased being a **U.S.-Israeli** condition, and became a **Soviet** condition, without which they would not consent to the renewal of bilateral relations.

There has been no visible shift in the Soviet stand on Israel. Their readiness to make some small concessions over the conference procedure was not done to placate Israel, but to pave the way to a conference—a Soviet strategic goal—on the back of which they plan to entrench themselves in the area by means of military guarantees.

The Jewish Congress has obtained an unprecedented gesture, and as a result will participate in cultural and religious enterprises. This achievement has eluded the Israeli Government. The reason for this is that the premises for the numerous talks, which were not always conducted by the appropriate ranks, were the procedures of an unborn conference.

It is true that philosophizing is a Jewish forte, but the Soviets excel in dialectics, which they demonstrated by keeping the Israelis busy threading the PLO elephant through the conference eye of the needle without mentioning the PLO. As a lever for their permanent entrenchment in the area, the conference is important to the Soviets and they are prepared to invest endless talks in it. On the other hand, the Americans' desire to prevent this development must not be ignored.

Peres' attempt to bridge the diametrically opposed interests of the U.S. and USSR was too ambitious and doomed to fail, even if Israel accepted the risk of a bridge built on its back by the superpowers. The mistaken approach of one of Peres' aides, who was overly impressed that the British electoral delegates arrived in Moscow on the eve of elections, is even more dangerous. This can be deduced from the remarks published last Friday in DAVAR. The same report quoted a senior Soviet official who said:

"I have met Dan Meridor. He is an interesting man, but he has not convinced me. We do not wish to interfere in the Israeli elections, but we are interested in promoting Israeli peace elements and communicating with them. This is why we maintain ties with Shim'on Peres and the Labor Party."

The DAVAR reporter does not mention the name of the "senior Soviet official's" interlocutor. However, the article's final paragraph says: **"That source made no mention of the meeting's date (with Meridor), and it probably took place without Shim'on Peres' knowledge."** It appears that the source is aware of what Peres does and does not know, while the Soviet official has no such awareness. Furthermore, Peres could not have known of the meeting, since Meridor claims it never took place.

Instead of the interparty bantering, it would have been preferable to find out why the Egyptian foreign minister was invited to Moscow, why Arab capitals are honored with visits by Soviet foreign ministers, while the Israeli foreign minister has to deal with an official who has not even explained why the Israeli consular delegation has not been granted entrance visas to the Soviet Union, claiming that this does not lie in his authority.

During his tenure as Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Hayim Herzog set up a meeting between Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and his Soviet counterpart, Gromyko. Dayan refused to attend the meeting, saying that the talks would be useless. His successor, Shamir, met twice with Gromyko, as did Peres. Talks should be held with the Soviets, and it is correct to assess that these talks would be equally important to them.

One must not forget, however, that even in times of diplomatic relations, no Israeli foreign minister was ever invited to Moscow, despite the frequent requests. The Soviets regard such an invitation as an award, to be given only to those who heed their advice. Shim'on Peres' efforts, therefore, to pave the way to a Moscow visit by scattering compliments on the Soviet openness, are a pointless waste of credit.

The Soviets would like to create the impression that there is an ongoing Israeli-Soviet dialogue on the international conference. It helps them. This help must not be wasted on an official incapable of even giving an answer regarding the Israelis' visas to Moscow. His capabilities and authority are restricted to the "constructive fog" he feeds us, forcing us to swallow an unsavory morsel called the international conference. This is no way to bring Peres to Moscow.

Investment of 'Large Sums' Urged in Security Zone

TA1605140588 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 May 88 p 9

[Commentary by Re'uven Pedatzur: "The Price of the Security Zone"]

[Text] The Iranian Government last year invested no less than $100 million in Shi'ite villages bordering on the security zone. Most of the sum was devoted to what the ayatollahs in Tehran call "raising the living standards of the inhabitants and deepening Islamic education."

On the surface it seems that this information is irrelevant to Israel's security concept of its northern border, and to the "law and order" operation carried out by the paratroopers north of the security zone. In fact, the complexity of the south Lebanese region requires Israel to respond to civilian activities stemming from Iranian decision making inspired by the religious leadership in Tehran.

The defense establishment understands that an increase in the living standards of the inhabitants of the villages north of the security zone must be balanced by a similar increase in the living standards of the Shi'ites in the areas under Israeli control. This is the only way to increase the interest of the inhabitants of the south in foiling plans by terrorists coming from the north, or at least motivate the inhabitants to not assist them.

If Israel does not allocate funds to improve the infrastructure of the 180,000 inhabitants of the security zone in the face of the flow of funds coming from Iran, the number of Shi'ites in this region who will turn their heads and outstretched hands toward the rich religious leaders will increase. Nobody in south Lebanon will lift a finger to oppose the terrorist activities aimed against Israel if he is not properly rewarded.

A decision to invest large sums to improve the civilian infrastructure in the security zone is required. This is the other side of the security coin. Beyond operation "law and order," in which the defense establishment sent hundreds of soldiers into a tough battle in fortified Maydun, the same establishment needs to provide services to the civilians within its jurisdiction.

The defense minister's critics, who attack the way the decision on the "law and order" operation was reached, are witnessing the firm line taken by Yitzhaq Rabin. Rabin is convinced that the right to take risks and to fail is solely his. The defense minister does not desist from stressing that he alone took the risk in deciding to set up the security zone 3 years ago. None of the other ministers was involved in the considerations and hesitations involved in setting up the zone. Therefore, he now also has the right to decide on military operations which in his view are consistent with security policy in the zone. Minister Rabin's position, of course, does not have to be accepted, but its existence shows the serious shortcomings in the decision making process in the Israeli Government.

The defense minister's attachment to the security zone is well founded. Its success is impressive. Of the 30 bands which aimed at carrying out terrorist attacks in Israel, only 10 reached the border fence. The rest were stopped inside the security zone and their missions were foiled

far from the border. Only 4 of the 10 gangs which reached the fence managed to cross it and they were wiped out a small distance away inside Israeli territory.

In the past 3 years not a single Israeli civilian has been killed in terrorist actions emanating from Lebanon. Of the 34 soldiers killed in south Lebanon, 29 were involved in direct operational activities against terrorists. The remainder were killed in accidents and accidental shootings.

But there is a price to be paid for the success of the security zone in south Lebanon. It is a price that will be paid in the long run, but ignoring it now might mean that the defense establishment will be facing surprises.

While the security zone has clear-cut operational advantages it has at least two significant disadvantages.

First, Israel has become a conquering power with all the connotations this arouses these days with the intifadha [uprising]. It is an occupation which means the IDF is ruling over 180,000 civilians of a foreign country.

The status of the IDF soldiers and officers in the liaison unit in Lebanon can be given any name, but it will not change the fact that they are members of a military government. The reality is that the State of Israel is in fact ruling over a given area in south Lebanon delineated by a red line on IDF maps.

So far, nobody considers the 180,000 Lebanese an occupied population which might try to shed the occupying regime. But we must recall what the attitude in Israel was to the population of the West Bank 18 years ago in order to be aware of the possible and perhaps even inevitable developments in the long term.

An additional drawback in the concept of the security zone is tied to the existence and maintenance of an Israeli-sponsored army.

There is no need to conduct deep historical research in order to evaluate the negative influence of mercenaries acting in the service of a foreign country. The sophisticated definitions and declarations about South Lebanese Army [SLA] soldiers defending their villages no longer works. In the final analysis it is a mercenary army. Only a few of the SLA soldiers, if any, would remain to man the posts on the border of the security zone if their salaries in U.S. dollars were not paid to them regularly.

It is sufficient to look at the growing anger in SLA ranks following the increase in salaries in Lebanon while those of the SLA have remained unchanged. Army sources well versed in the mood in General Lahd's army believe there will be no choice but to increase the monthly wage of the SLA soldiers by some $50. If this is not done we will be witnessing desertions and the abandonment of posts. Not only is the SLA an army of mercenaries, but they are mercenaries serving on a certain condition, which to our shame is worth $50 a month.

It is possible that the time has come for those cabinet ministers who expressed anger over the fact that operation "law and order" was ordered without their knowledge to initiate a wide ranging and serious debate on Israel's security policy on the northern border. The voluntary surrender of involvement in the forming of policy, including on the strategic level, and the abandonment of this field exclusively to the defense minister, does not free the other ministers from their overall responsibility for the IDF's activities or the implications stemming from an extended occupation of Lebanese territory although it is called a "security zone."

U.S. 'Desperately Seeking' Hostage Agreement

LD1805160188 Kuwait KUNA in English 1506 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Beirut, May 18 (KUNA)—Contacts between the United States and Iran over the fate of American hostages in Lebanon were underway, a diplomatic source told KUNA wednesday.

The source would not elaborate on the nature of the contacts or at what level they were being held.

Washington and other international powers had already put pressure on the Syrian Government to dissuade it, at least temporarily, from sending its troops into the southern suburb of Beirut for fear the move would eventually endanger the lives of American hostages believed to be held in the area, he said.

Earlier in the week Syria announced it was sending 5,000 troops into southern Beirut to quell fighting between the pro-Syrian Amal Movement and a pro-Iranian group calling itself Hizballah (Party of God).

The source who wished not to be named did not discount the likelihood of "talks between Washington, Tehran and Damascus" to secure the release of American hostage before any military move being executed.

A Kuwaiti newspaper reported Wednesday that American hostages held in Lebanon had been moved to the Iranian Embassy in Beirut in view of the fierce clashes between Amal and Hizballah.

The paper, in a dispatch from Washington, quoted an American source saying the administration was desperately seeking an agreement with Iran for freeing the hostages.

Hostages Reportedly Threatened

JN1805181488 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] A source close to Syria said in Beirut today that the captors of the western hostages in Lebanon threatened to kill their captives if the Syrian Army intervenes in Beirut's southern suburb to end the ongoing battles between Amal and Hizballah. The source added that this threat was one of the main reasons for postponing the Syrian Army's deployment in the southern suburb, because Syria does not want to be responsible for the killing of the hostages.

Besharati 'Hinted' at Release

JN1805142288 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1400 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The Lebanese prime minister today received Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, who made a statement after the meeting in which he hinted at the possibility of releasing the Western hostages in Lebanon if battles stop between the Amal Movement and Hizballah in Beirut's southern suburb.

Syrian Envoy, Fadlallah Discuss Troop Deployment

More on Hostages

NC1905065588 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] It was disclosed today that a meeting was held between a Syrian political envoy and Scholar Fadlallah last night. The discussions dealt with the inevitable deployment of the Syrian forces in the southern suburb and the means necessary to ensure a smooth deployment. According to a source close to Hizballah, it will obtain political and security guarantees affecting the existence and future of Hizballah's institutions.

Citing Islamic sources in Beirut, REUTER reports that the kidnappers' threat to kill their hostages if the Syrian forces intervene militarily in the southern suburb was one of the principal reasons for the postponement of the Syrian deployment in the area. The agency notes that the threat was conveyed to Syrian officials Sunday in the wake of the dispatch of 7,000 Syrian troops to the area. REUTER maintains that the deployment decision has been delayed because Syria does not want to be held responsible for the killing of the hostages, but rather wants to exploit this situation.

Meanwhile, fighting continued in Al-Shiyah and Al-Ghubayrah in complete disregard for a series of cease-fire agreements. Security sources have disclosed that some 500 pro-Amal partisans of the Army have been brought to the Al-Shiyah-Al-Ghubayrah front in an attempt to besiege Hizballah gunmen there.

Relations Termed 'Normal'

NC1905132188 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has told AFP that the very imminent Syrian entry into the southern suburb is the subject of negotiations. He described relations between Syria and Hizballah as normal, stressing that Hizballah has been coexisting with the Syrian Army in the Al-Biqa' Valley, and Damascus supports Hizballah in its struggle against Israel.

'Syrian Soldiers Can Enter'

NC1905104388 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Hizballah has conditionally accepted the Syrian Army's deployment in the southern suburb. A Hizballah spokesman has said that Syrian soldiers can enter the suburb, peacefully and in limited numbers, to establish observation points.

The spokesman said that talks between Hizballah representatives and the Syrian command in Lebanon dealt with organizing the Syrian entry, stressing that the two sides were in complete accord strategically.

Meanwhile, the Iranian Embassy has stressed that contacts between the Syrian command in Beirut and Iranian officials will continue today to find a political solution that will safeguard security in the southern suburb once and for all. However, differences still exist, especially over the force to be deployed there.

Iran's Besharati Continues Beirut Discussions

Talks With Syrians

NC1805131588 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Acting Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss received at his home at 1015 today Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, who was accompanied by Iranian Ambassador Ahmad Dastmalchiyan and Embassy Adviser Mohammadi. Following his meeting with Prime Minister al-Huss, Besharati was asked to verify reports that he had said a Syrian entry into the southern suburb would complicate matters. He answered: We exerted great efforts to prevent the blood letting and stop this destructive campaign against the southern suburb. Tough measures will beget similar or tougher measures. Those who believe they can wash away blood by spilling more are greatly mistaken. We have agreed with the Syrian brothers to work for eliminating the causes of the war in the southern suburb. Fortunately, all those involved in this war have faith in what we strive for. Our discussions yesterday were much better tnan our discussions the day before. Today we are more hopeful of achieving success. Like the people, all the gunmen have tired of this war.

Besharati was asked: Some demand the Syrian forces' entry into the southern suburb. Will your efforts conclude with the expansion of West Beirut's security plan, permitting the Syrian forces to enter peacefully, without clashing with any party? He answered: We have made a proposal in this regard. We propose that after consolidating the cease-fire and withdrawing the gunmen, a force be formed to maintain security in the southern suburb.

When asked who would constitute this force, he answered: We and the Syrian brothers will guarantee this force.

Besharati was then asked who they would propose, other than the Syrian forces, to participate in this force. He replied: I said at the beginning that the suburb is more in need of security than external forces. There must be specific security machinery in Lebanon to ensure the Republic's presidency [elections] deadline.

Concerning the Iranian stand on halting the fighting, particularly as the recent cease-fire agreement has been repeatedly violated, Besharati said: It is regrettable that clashes in Lebanon have become routine. We and the Syrian brothers have agreed to unmask everyone who rips apart or violates the cease-fire. I have been informed that gunmen are observing the cease-fire to a certain extent. Asked if the negotiations with Syria mean the revocation of Syria's decision to enter the suburb, Besharati said: They will definitely lead to this.

Besharati was then asked: There is popular demand for the Syrian forces' entry into the suburb; will the Syrian forces enter eventually? Besharati answered: If all the people wanted this and if this were in Syria's interests, yes. However, Syria's interests do not dictate this, nor do all the people want Syria to enter the suburb.

Asked if this means there is disagreement between Syria and Iran regarding Syrian entry into the suburb, he replied: We maintain the best of relations with the brothers in Syria. We also conduct the best of dialogues and maintain good understanding with them.

Besharati was asked: You previously played a role in securing the release of some foreign hostages in Lebanon; will you exert efforts to secure additional releases, even though you might be busy now with security matters? He answered: It is being said that kidnappings in Lebanon are part of the crisis which the country is experiencing. I believe we can end the present state of war—and it will end, God willing—then the second issue will also be solved.

Concerning the guarantees Hizballah demands from the Syrians to allow their entry into the suburb, Besharati said: Syria defends Hizballah; there are no problems between Hizballah and Syria. Good conditions exist between them. Hizballah has problems with other forces, but not with the Syrians.

Regarding the role of Revolutionary Guards in the suburb incidents and any intention to expel them, Besharati said: The Revolutionary Guards have no role in the southern suburb. They will not be involved in the question of the southern suburb. Those who propose that the Syrian forces enter the suburb also propose that the Revolutionary Guards enter the suburb. Those who made these two proposals committed a gross mistake.

Besharati was asked: Can we infer from what you say that a joint Syrian-Iranian Revolutionary Guard force will ultimately be formed to consolidate security in the suburb? He answered: The issue is not one of our forces' entry into the suburb. Rather it is a question of psychological and protective auspices for a cease-fire by the Islamic Republic. This group could come from the Syrian forces.

Besharati was asked: There are some who say that the issue is being dealt with on two levels: Your contacts in Beirut, and the continuous contacts between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and 'Ali Khamene'i. Do you believe events will have any effect on Syrian-Iranian relations? He replied: Relations between us and our Syrian brothers

are very good, excellent and fraternal. Therefore, there are continuous contacts between the presidents of Syria and the Islamic Republic to solve problems, sometimes via the telephone. This is what is happening now. Furthermore, we are trying to resolve existing differences in a manner safeguarding the interests of the Lebanese people. I hope you will meet in the future in Lebanon with the committee which will come here to study ways to reconstruct the suburb and undo the injustice which has befallen its inhabitants.

Asked what he discussed with Prime Minister Al-Huss, he said: Our relations with Prime Minister al-Huss are good and fraternal. I have met with him every time I have come to Lebanon. He thanked us for the Islamic Republic's efforts to stop the bloodshed in the southern suburb. We conveyed to him an official invitation in the name of the Islamic Republic to visit Tehran. His excellency has accepted this invitation.

Asked whether the combatants will remain in their present positions, Besharati said: We hope all these conditions will be resolved and that the hopes the people have attached to our efforts will be realized.

Besharati was asked if he would offer a new proposal when he meets with Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an today. He answered: There is consistency in our efforts. We will act on the basis of the proposal we seek to implement.

The Iranian delegation then visited Amal leader Minister Nabih Birri.

Kan'an Comments on Meeting

NC1805191588 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 18 May 88

[Excerpts] A 1-hour meeting dealing with the situation in the southern suburb and attended by Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, chief of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, and a number of senior Syrian officers was held today at the Syrian observers headquarters. After the meeting Brig Gen Kan'an said:

[Begin recording] [Kan'an] Agreement was reached yesterday to hold a meeting of the committee in order to revive it, and the committee met. Today's meeting with Brother Deputy Foreign Minister Besharati was designed to evaluate the committee's work and to pursue what was agreed upon to achieve the desired results.

[Unidentified Reporter] Your Excellency Brigadier General, the representative of the Iranian government said following his meeting with Acting Prime Minister al-Huss that it had been insisted that the Syrian forces not enter the southern suburb. What is your assessment?

[Kan'an] It has not been insisted that the Syrian forces not enter the suburb, because the Syrian decision was made in order to end a tragedy. There was also an urgent request by all the leaders concerned and all the suburb's residents—I believe you have been following the popular demonstrations. However, the implementation of this Syrian decision has been held up by another Syrian decision in order to give political efforts a chance to achieve a solution. [passage omitted] We are currently seeking to reestablish bridges of confidence between the two parties. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] What will happen if the political efforts do not succeed?

[Kan'an] If political efforts do not succeed, there will be other action. We will not allow the situation to remain as it is today.

[Reporter] Your Excellency Brigadier General, His Eminence Shaykh Shams al-Din [deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council] has rejected the revival of the committees...

[Kan'an, interrupting] In order that you know the truth, I wish to say that the brothers in Hizballah support the Syrian entry into the suburb. Hizballah support the Syrian entry into the suburb. A Hizballah delegation came to see me yesterday and said there is no problem regarding a Syrian entry. Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah also stated that there is no problem regarding a Syrian entry.

[Reporter] Then where is the problem?

[Kan'an] There is no problem. The committee is making an effort to rebuild the bridges of confidence between the two organizations or parties through direct contacts with Brother Nabih Birri and the brothers in Hizballah in order to deal with the situation on the ground. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] It is clear from what you are saying, Your Excellency Brigadier General, that there is no solution except through the entry of the Syrian forces.

[Kan'an] We are searching for solutions, but I am discussing a problem that has taken place on the ground. The Iranians have no problem with a Syrian entry. I believe they support it because they understand the reality of the situation. The Syrian umbrella is a basic requirement for reassuring the concerned parties and preventing conflict in any part of Lebanon. The Syrian umbrella is a popular Lebanese demand. Syria is a guarantee for all. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Further Reportage on Meetings

NC1805153188 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, head of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon, has said that Syria has decided to hold up the deployment of its forces in the southern suburb in order to give an opportunity for the success of the on-going political efforts.

Following a meeting with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, Kan'an said: There must be a force to supervise the situation on the ground and prevent the resumption of clashes. He questioned the effectiveness of the 4-member committee in supervising the cease-fire, noting that experience has shown that the Syrian Army restored security to Lebanese areas that were the scene of battles.

On the other hand, Besharati met with Amal Movement leader Nabih Birri. When asked about his country's stand on the Syrian decision to enter the suburb, Besharati said: We have said that as long as there are potentially peaceful solutions, then there is no need for the entry of Syrian forces. We are in full agreement with Brother Nabih Birri. We are continuing the negotiations with Brig Gen Ghazi Kan'an and Brother Nabih Birri. We have always sought a step by step progress.

In response to another question, the Iranian official said: We are in agreement with Brother Birri and other concerned officials on the future of security in the suburb.

When asked about the criticism leveled against the Islamic Republic of Iran for not having balanced relations with Hizballah and the Amal Movement, Besharati said: The movement and Hizballah are two sons of the Islamic Republic. Brother Nabih is an old and prominent son of the revolution. When it was mentioned that recent events have not indicated this stand, he said: There is room for brotherly differences in a family.

When asked how long political endeavors will continue while people are dispersed and there is a persistent demand for the Syrian forces' entry, he said: The Syrian brothers, the people of the suburb and those concerned with it, as well as the Shi'ite figures all have higher interests, and we are listening to all the views.

On his part, Nabih Birri said: There will be no comment before the suburb plan is completed. He added: We are now at the start of a radical discussion and a serious endeavor with the Iranian brothers and with the representative of the Iranian president to find the appropriate solution, not just for Amal and Hizballah, but for all the people and our kinsmen in the southern suburb. It is important to safeguard their lives and futures so that the situation will return to normal and in order to contribute to the fight in the South against Israel. Birri added: There is a deep split between the groups, but a solution must be reached. Our view is that there must be a security force that is both friendly and brotherly to the two parties, but which will still safeguard the people and the security in the suburb. It is not in the interest of anyone to have illegal security situation.

Asked whether the Syrian decision to enter the suburb is still in force, he said: You must ask the Syrian brothers. Responding to another question on the possibility of reaching an agreement to withdraw the gunmen, he said: We will try to discuss this today. We have already started this discussion, and we do not rule out a meeting by the higher 4-member committee.

Birri made another statement a short time ago in which he stressed that there will be no solution except through the Syrian forces' entry into the suburb. He said: I have vowed not to make any statement throughout this catastrophic tribulation until the suburb is saved. However, a deep split has occurred, one that cannot be healed through committees, party security, or joint security, or by merely restoring of an office of this or that party. Consequently, the security of the suburb must become part of West Beirut's security, and must be upheld by the legitimate forces that are represented by the Syrian brothers and the internal security forces, groups which have always been the saviour, from Al-Biqa' to the South. Following today's visit by the representative of the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and after hearing his statement and in order to avoid any misunderstanding, I found it my duty to immediately repay the visit. I wanted to stress to the Iranian brothers that the solution simply and solely lies with the Syrian forces' entry into the suburb, as Syria is the custodian of all the parties concerned, backs all the nationalists, and seeks to unite all these rifles for the purpose of fighting the Israeli enemy. I will go to the Iranian brothers again, hoping that we can reach a solution that will safeguard the suburb's dignity and its sons based on this premise. This is what is required, not whether any of these gunmen triumph over the others.

Birri Agrees on Cease-Fire

NC1805195388 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] According to information received by the Voice of Lebanon, contacts underway at more than one level to calm the situation in the southern suburb have led to an agreement to consolidate the cease-fire starting at 1800 today, and gunmen to withdraw from the suburb's streets starting at noon tomorrow, Thursday.

The reports added that no publicity has been given to this agreement in order to avoid any setback in the area. The agreement was discussed in detail today in the Iranian Embassy by Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati and Minister Nabih Birri. The two officials focused their talks on the situation in Al-Shiyah and Al-Ghubayrah, and on the Amal Movement's siege against the Hizballah office in Al-Hajjaj. Besharati told Birri that Hizballah is demanding that the siege of this position be lifted in order to allow those inside to leave in Iranian vehicles.

A source in West Beirut has told the Voice of Lebanon that today's agreement is more serious than those reached during the past 3 days. He added that the Syrians will not enter the southern suburb for the time being, particularly as presidential contacts between Syria

and Iran are being intensified in order to calm the situation. The meetings in Beirut involving Besharati, Birri, and Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an were also held for the same purpose.

The source also said that the purpose of Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Talas' visit to Beirut was to calm the military atmosphere there, and to give Talas an opportunity to congratualte the Syrian soldiers on 'Id al-Fitr.

The agreement set 1800 for the cease-fire, but this was violated at 2000 when the sounds of explosions were heard coming from the southern suburb. The explosions are continuing.

IRNA Reports on Beirut Talks

LD1805193488 Tehran IRNA in English 1905 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Beirut, May 18, IRNA—Iran's Acting Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, currently here at the head of a delegation to patch up differences between warring Muslims in the southern Beirut, met with Acting Lebanese Prime Minister Salim al-Huss Wednesday.

In the meeting, al-Huss lauded the Islamic Republic for its sincere efforts to end clashes between Muslims in the southern suburbs and called for their continuation till the rift is healed.

Besharati, on behalf of Iranian officials, extended an invitation to the Lebanese acting premier to pay an official visit to Tehran which was accepted.

The Iranian official, noting that his delegation's extensive efforts to end the current bloodshed and destruction in Lebanon, said, "There is no difference of opinion between us and our Syrian brothers. Both sides believe that the cause of such bitter incidents should be uprooted."

Besharati, responding to a question on the future of southern Beirut, said that there are plans underway to form a security force to maintain peace in south Beirut as soon as cease-fire comes into force and the warring parties withdraw from the streets. Iran and Syria will guarantee the success of such plans, he added.

On the idea of deploying personnel of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) in the southern sector of the Lebanese capital, Besharati noted "IRGC has never played any role in issues relevant to southern Beirut and those who now favor the arrival of Syrian troops here had also supported the arrival of IRGC force there."

In a separate meeting here today, Besharati held talks with head of the Amal Militia Nabih Birri on various subjects including ways of ending clashes between warring Muslim groups.

At the end of talks, Besharati stressed that there was no need for Syrian troops to enter southern Beirut, noting "our Syrian brothers and southern Beirut residents have now more important jobs to do. All parties concerned especially Shi'ite Muslims believe in this fact that with resolving the crises peacefully, there would be no need for military intervention."

Also, after the meeting, Birri said that efforts aimed at ironing out differences between the Amal and Hezbollah (Party of God) are at the beginning of a new stage, and that his Iranian brethren are seriously pursuing it.

[Tehran Domestic Service in Persian at 1630 GMT on 18 May broadcasts an item on the Besharati-al-Huss meeting which adds the following:

"Later, Brother Besharati and his accompanying delegation met with General Ghazi Kan'an, commander of the Syrian forces' intelligence service in Lebanon, and talked to him about the methods for consolidating the cease-fire and preventing the violation of the agreement for pacifying the battlefields in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

Simultaneously with the political efforts of our country, the situation is relatively calm in (Shiya) and (Ghubayri) axes in the southern suburbs and there were only sporadic exchanges of fire between the Hezbollah forces and the Amal movement. According to informed military sources, such actions which violate security in the southern suburbs are carried out by those elements who are against the political solution proposed by the Islamic Republic of Iran."]

Talas Addresses Syrian Forces in Beirut

JN1905211188 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2015 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Damascus—On the 2d day of 'Id al-Fitr and upon the instructions of His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, has paid a visit to some of our combat units in Beirut. Comrade Tawfiq Salihah, Ba'th Party Regional Command member; and General 'Ali Aslan, deputy chief of staff of the Army and Armed Forces, accompanied him on this visit. In the midst of tumultuous applause and slogans wishing the party and the leader long life, Gen Talas delivered a speech. He began by conveying His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad's congratulations and his wishes of success in carrying out their honest pan-Arab mission in the Lebanese arena. He then explained to them the difficult circumstances the Arab nation is experiencing, and the role of imperialism and colonialism in exacerbating and destabilizing the situation in the region through the U.S. envoys who arrive to the region to peddle Camp David and the Zionist ideas, and to encircle the uprising, abort it, and save Israel.

Gen Talas affirmed to the fighters that the internecine fighting in the Lebanese arena harms pan-Arab interests and the Arab nation's causes because it is a bleeding wound which only benefits our enemy. He added: This is a fact everyone must realize, and they must return as they were, united in one rank to fight the Zionist enemy. He also affirmed that Israel is exerting efforts to exploit its military and political invasion of Lebanon in order to have a role in Lebanon and in its future political developments. In his speech, Gen Talas spoke about Syria's pan-Arab role in Lebanon. He affirmed that Hafiz al-Asad's Syria will pursue its efforts to carry out the national and pan-Arab duties that it shoulders and will not permit any gambling over Lebanon's Arab future. He said that the Syrian Arab forces will be lying in wait for all the schemes that the Zionist and imperialist circles concoct, no matter how many sacrifices it has to offer. He said that Syria will continue to support the Lebanese national resistance so that it may fully perform its role in the field of ending the Lebanese problem and establishing peace and security in fraternal Lebanon. In his speech, Gen Talas called on the combat units to be alert and remain fully prepared as there is no action except by proceeding forward in confronting the enemy, thus translating the words of leader Al-Asad, the leader of our triumphant march, into actions, deeds, and daily practices in a manner that will enhance the essence of steadfastness and in the form that will achieve for our steadfast masses their victory and the liberation of the Arab territories that were usurped.

Dawud Speaks at Rally in Support of Birri, Al-Asad
NC1705132688 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 May 88

[Excerpts] Popular delegations from numerous villages in the South today visited the Amal Movement's office in Al-Nabatiyah and expressed their support for the movement, Minister Nabih Birri, and the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council. The delegations expressed dismay over the incidents in Beirut and hailed the Syrian decision to send troops into the southern suburb to save its inhabitants from the insidious infighting. [passage omitted]

This morning, a massive demonstration was held in Tyre in support of the Amal Movement, the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, and Minister Nabih Birri. The demonstrators, who were carrying Lebanese and Amal flags, placards of support, and pictures of Minister Nabih and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, shouted slogans such as the following: Yes to the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council; Yes to Amal; Yes to the bearer of the trust; No Custodianship, except to the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council and the Amal Movement; and the town of Al-Sadr and the stronghold of Brother Nabih Birri supports the October hero [President Hafiz al-Asad].

At midday, the demonstrators gathered in the main square in Tyre, where they listened to a speech by Dawud Dawud, chairman of the Amal Movement's Executive Committee. Dawud said: To those who wanted to use the fighting in the suburb to blackmail the South, its cause, and its inhabitants, we tell them that the South has had its word in the streets, at home, and in this demonstration. The South has said no to the pressure. We tell them that the South is standing up for itself. Amal considers itself responsible for the South, in the absence of state power and state justice. No power in the world will dissuade us from playing this role.

Dawud added: The institutions formed by Imam Musa al-Sadr, namely the Amal Movement and the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, will remain the only framework representing Lebanese Shi'ites, regardless of how much money is paid and how many souls are bought. Those who think there is a religious pretext for killing us have no place among us. Let them understand that Nabih Birri is not battling for himself but for the South, a responsibility which he shares with the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council.

Some people in Bi'r al-'Abd [in Beirut's southern suburb] once asked: Who sanctioned the confiscation of the Islamic resistance's weapons? It is our turn to ask them: Who sanctioned the raids on Al-Nabatiyah and Al-Ghaziyah?

Dawud concluded with a plea to President Hafiz al-Asad, the leader of the Arab world who has saved West Beirut, to save the suburb from the malefactors. Dawud said: We will stand beside Al-Asad's Syria in the struggle against Israel and for the liberation of the Arab land.

Saudi King Contacts Al-Huss, Expresses Support
NC1905102388 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Acting Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss was contacted today by Saudi King Fahd Ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, who reiterated the Saudi Kingdom's support for Lebanon in confronting its ordeal and standing against Israeli attacks. King Fahd emphasized that the Kingdom will spare no efforts to help Lebanon and its people end their tragedy and restore their security and stability.

Israeli Aircraft Fly Over Beirut 19 May
NC1905124188 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1230 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Israeli military aircraft flew over Beirut and other Lebanese areas on reconnaissance missions today.

Car Bomb Injures Fatah Uprising Official 18 May
NC1905065988 Beirut Voice of Lebanon 0615 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] An explosion last night under the car of Abu Fadi Hammad, secretary of Fatah Uprising, near the Mar Ilyas camp left Hammad and two other Palestinians injured.

Afghanistan

First Soviet Soldiers Return Home Via Balkh

LD1805185188 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 18 May 88

[Excerpt] The first group of the Soviet limited military contingent, which has completed its internationalist duties in the Republic of Afghanistan, returned to its peace-loving country this morning by the Friendship Bridge of (Hayratan), Balkh Province, in accordance with the Geneva accords.

The glorious farewell ceremony in (Hayratan) was attended by Lieutenant General Muhammad Rafi', minister of defense; Najmuddin Kawaini, member of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo; and Mir Sahib Karwal, candidate member of the Politburo and secretary of the PDPA Central Committee; party and government officials of Balkh Province; generals and officers of the armed forces in this province; and thousands of elders, clergymen, and inhabitants of Balkh Province and (Hayratan). [passage omitted]

2d Memorandum on Pakistani Violation of Accords

LD1905162488 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The Liaison Department of the Afghan Foreign Ministry, along with the UN goodwill delegation between Afghanistan and Pakistan, has handed over a second official memorandum from the Afghan Government to the UN goodwill mission in Kabul.

The memorandum deals with the Pakistani Government's violation of the Geneva accords, in particular with regard to the increased dispatch of weapons and ammunition to Afghan territory.

UN's Helminen Departs for Islamabad 19 May

LD1905164088 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] General Ravli Helminen, assistant to the representative of the UN secretary general, who arrived in Kabul a few days ago from Islamabad, left Kabul for Islamabad this afternoon by special plane.

General Helminen is head of the UN good offices mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan to supervise the implementation of the Geneva accords.

The report adds that at Kabul airport General Helminen and the accompanying delegation were seen off by the head of the Foreign Relations Department of the Ministry of Defense and the director of the United Nations and International Relations Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

BAKHTAR Carries Najibullah 'Id al-Fitr Message

LD1705194088 Kabul BAKHTAR in Dari 1130 GMT 17 May 88

["Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan: Message on the Eve of 'Id al-Fitr, the End of the Month of Ramadan"—BAKHTAR headline]

[Text] Kabul, 17 May (BAKHTAR)—In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Faithful and Muslim compatriots:

On the occassion of this respected day, the arrival of 'Id al-Fitr, I tender the warmest and most cordial congratulations to all compatriot brothers and sisters and to all Muslims. Accept our cordial and deepest heart-felt wishes for the health, safety, and comfort of every family, and the happiness, tranquility, and prosperity of every Afghan household. I plead with God that the days of 'Id al-Fitr be ones of happiness and prosperity for all compatriots, all Pashtun and Baluchi brothers, all Muslims, and our neighborly countries Iran and Pakistan.

The month of Ramadan is a month of great tests and steadfastness. It is for the purification of the soul, selflessness, and submission to the order of God. Every true Muslim tries to pass this great test. The people of Afghanistan pass this month by fasting and reciting the holy Koran. I plead with God to accept our Ramadan duties, worship, and Koran recitation; to be gracious to the Afghan people for their sake; and to put and end to the fratricide and killing of Muslims by other Muslims through your eternal power and glory.

Surely the real meaning of 'Id al-Fitr is shrouded in reconciliation and the alleviation of anger.

Our Muslim fathers, brothers, and sisters know that after the many years of sorrow and grief of the imposed war, our wise and peace-loving people declared the national reconciliation policy 1 and 1/2 years ago in line with the predetermination of God and the altruistic proposal of the ulema and clergy to prevent and end the killing of Muslims by Muslim hands and to secure peace and calm in the country.

The Islamic and humanitarian thoughts of national reconciliation, despite impediments, found their way into the hearts of our people, to the hearts of those who are out of the country, those who took up arms against their Muslim brothers. National reconciliation has gained the support and interest of our planet's peace-loving forces and has penetrated the hearts of those who previously looked at us not only with a lack of understanding but also with hostility and anger. The time when the sun of peace will shine clearer is not far away, with the grace, kindness, and benevolence of God. In spite of our thirst and vehement need for peace, we face

the stubborn opposition of our enemies, who disturb the calm of our country and want to do business with the blood of our Muslim people.

Dear compatriots:

It is written in the country's Constitution that Islam is the religion of Afghanistan. The state has done much work to serve the sacred religion of Islam. Enormous materials and funds are spent to build and maintain mosques.

An Islamic university was opened and is functioning. A high Islamic council was established in the office of the presidency. Respected ulema, clergy, and the country's elders not only enjoy the state's political life. During the country's recent National Assembly elections, 61 clergy, ulema, and elders were elected senators. We will pay serious attention to the strenghtening and consolidation of the sacred religion of Islam. This is our duty and no one should doubt it.

Dear compatriots:

With the predetermination of God this delightful 'Id al-Fitr coincides with a great historic event in our country. I mean, first and foremost, the implementation of the Geneva agreements on a political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan, including the start of the withdrawal of the limited Soviet contigent to their peace-loving country.

The Soviet contingent came to our assistance at a very difficult time. The Soviet Union's internationalist troops helped our people defend the freedom, independence, and territorial integrity of their beloved country, Afghanistan. The internationalist troops nobly fulfilled their internationalist duty in our land. All of you, brothers and sisters, notice how respectfully and gratefully they are being sent off to their beloved country. Our noble people will never forget the heroism, chivalry, and valor of the Soviet Union's internationalist troops. The memories of the internationalists' help to Afghanistan will be passed from generation to generation, from father to child and grandchild, and from heart to heart.

On this day I want to thank on your behalf the internationalist troops of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people, the Soviet leadership, and M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, for the overall help and support they extended to the Afghan people.

The Geneva agreements brought about the prospectus of a stable peace in Afghanistan. Now the most important issue is the honest implementation of the obligations that emanate from these agreements. Today we again declare that Afghanistan will implement its obligations resolutely, honestly, and without deviation.

Dear compatriots:

My Islamic, humanitarian, and Afghan responsibilities do not allow me, on this aupicious 'Id al-Fitr, to forget even for a moment the tear-filled eyes of our orphans, the black veils of our sisters, the sad faces of our mothers, and the broken backs of the fathers who mourn the loss of their loved ones or await the arrival of their relatives. I pray to almighty God to give them all patience. I point out that the warmongers are our enemies, those of our families, children, wealth, homeland, world, and of tomorrow. We cannot forget for one moment the effect of being far from our compatriots, who live in camps and foreign lands. On this day we address them again and say: May you all have a happy 'Id Al-Fitr; the homeland awaits you. Come back and let us pray in one mosque, embrace each other, bandage each other's wounds, and wipe away the dust of sorrow and sadness from each other's faces.

Again, from the bottom of my heart, I congratulate on the auspicious 'Id al-Fitr all our courageous Pashtun and Baluchi brothers. Please accept my sincere wishes for your good health and safety and for the prosperity and tranquility of all your families.

I ask almighty God to grant happiness and prosperity to the elders, chiefs, clergymen, ulema, and all nationalities and tribes.

Again I sincerely invite all brothers and sisters residing in our beloved homeland, Afghanistan, and those Afghans who are temporary residing in other countries, to struggle to restore peace and to end the catastrophy of fratricide and bloodshed, in the name of the homeland and in the name of everything that is sacred to humanity and to the Muslim people of Afghanistan.

As honest sons of this homeland and responsible human beings concerning the homeland and people, and given our perception of our mission to implement God's orders, I invite all compatriots to put aside previous annoyances and to unite for the sake of orphans' tears and mothers' sorrows, those who mourn for their lost sons, and to come and join us in the task of restoring peace. Our desire is to serve and to assist God's slaves. We seek no revenge against anyone. As almighty God has said:

Bad and good are not equal. In return for a bad act one should do good. I face almighty God and ask him to give us further success to serve his slaves as he wishes. If God wills, the people of Afghanistan will go forward successfully and restore nationwide peace, with the assistance and blessing of almighty God. I fully believe that we will achieve final victory as we have God's help. With the help of God; we worship you and seek your assistance. [Koranic verse]

Verily, success comes from God.

Qandahar Forces Commander Dies From Wounds

LD1805165788 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The body of the late Brigadier General 'Abdul Mutalib, deputy commander of Qandahar forces, was laid to rest this morning at the Martyrs Hill with special military ceremonies.

The BIA military section reports that Lieutenant General Sayyed Muhammad Gulabzoy; Lieutenant General Shahnawa Tani, chief of the Army Staff of the Afghanistan Armed Forces; Major General 'Abdul Haq 'Ulumi, incumbent of the PDPA Central Committee Military Section and president of the Armed Forces' Political Affairs Office; presidents of the Internal Affairs Ministry and Ministry of State Security; generals and senior officers of the Armed Forces; and friends and relatives of the deceased took part in the funeral.

After the burial of the deceased, Brigadier General Motaleb's obituary was read by the deputy president of personnel of the Ministry of Defense. Brigadier General Zabihullah Ziarmal, chief president of Political Affairs of the Ministry of Defense, talked about the heroism and untiring services of the deceased and consoled his family on behalf of the Ministry of Defense. A member of his family thanked the leadership of the Ministry of Defense for their sympathy.

Martyred Brigadier General 'Abdul Mutalib was wounded recently while discharging his duty in the Qandahar Province area and was urgently sent to the Armed Forces Medical Institute. However, as is known, he died yesterday morning, 17 May.

According to another report, esteemed President Najibullah has ordered that Brigadier General Abdul Motaleb be posthumously awarded the rank of major general and the Red Flag for his earnest services.

Rebel Commander Opposes Frontal Assault on Kabul

BK1905081288 Hong Kong AFP in English 0805 GMT 19 May 88

[By Alain Boebion]

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, May 19 (AFP)—A leading commander of the Afghan resistance Thursday rejected the possibility of any frontal assault against Kabul, saying this would mean a huge loss in human lives and the destruction of the capital.

"An armed operation against Kabul would be the last thing for the resistance to do," said Abdul Haq, commander of the Kabul region for the moderate Yunis Khalis faction of the fundamentalist Hezb-e Eslami group.

In an interview with AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, the 30-year-old commander, one of the best known figures of the seven-party Afghan resistance alliance, said he was "against any operation that will lead to the loss of human lives and the destruction of Kabul."

He criticized recent rebel attacks on the eastern city of Jalalabad, which Soviet troops evacuated Sunday at the start of their withdrawal from Afghanistan, and the southern city of Qandahar, whose Afghan Army commander died Wednesday as a result of wounds sustained in fighting last week.

Instead, he said, all efforts should be concentrated on Kabul and the weapon should be "underground action"—psychological warfare rather than heavy arms.

"There is no rush," he said. "We must increase the pressure on the regular army and demoralize them... (then) the government will fall by itself."

The way to achieve this, he said, would be to seek the support of the residents of Kabul and to remain in constant contact with mujahidin belonging to all components of the alliance who have managed to infiltrate the capital.

On Sunday, as Kabul officials prepared to greet the first Soviet troops pulling out of Jalalabad, Abdul Haq distributed a signed letter to the population of Kabul, calling on them to engage in acts of civil disobedience and desert their government jobs to join the ranks of the mujahidin.

Asked whether the often clashing political views of the mujahidin groups that make up the alliance did not render joint action difficult on the Kabul front, Abdul Haq replied: "No problem."

"Kabul, in fact, is the place where such problems occur the least, which is why we have a better chance of succeeding" with psychological warfare than with armed action, he said.

Speaking at his headquarters, a sprawling house guarded by mujahidin armed with Soviet AK-47 assault rifles, Abdul Haq Also accused the United States and the Soviet Union of "playing a funny game."

What the two superpowers are doing, he said, "is unclear to all... They do not tell us what their intentions are."

Washington and Moscow are guarantors of the U.N.-brokered April 14 Geneva accord between Pakistan and Afghanistan which made the Soviet troop withdrawal possible.

The mujahidin refuse to recognize the agreement because they say they are not involved. He also denied reports that there were any negotiations under way between the United States and the rebels.

"We sometimes meet over a cup of tea," he said, "but that is as far as it goes. Neither the Americans nor the Soviets ever tell us anything."

He strongly opposed the idea of a provisional Afghan mujahidin government being set up inside Afghanistan, in areas close to the border with Pakistan, where all the members of the rebel alliance are based and which is home to some three million Afghan refugees.

"Firstly," Abdul Haq said, "this would mean a compromise with the Kabul regime, and all compromise with Kabul is out of the question.

"Secondly," he said, "the creation of such a government would mean dividing the country into two and the result would be civil war."

CSSR Youth Delegation Visits Kabul School

AU1105134088 Prague MLADA FRONTA in Czech 6 May 88 p 5

[Kabul dispatch by Zbynek Fiala, MLADA FRONTA special reporter: "Afghan Prospects; Protocol on Cooperation Between the Socialist Youth Union and the DYOA"]

[Excerpts] "About 300 young Afghans are currently pursuing their studies in Czechoslovakia. This, of course, is a matter of an intergovernmental agreement. But the protocol we will sign today opens the road toward expanding contacts between the young people in both countries," Jozef Durica, deputy chairman of the Central Committee of the Socialist Youth Union (SSM) and chairman of the SSM's Slovak Central Committee, said in reply to a question asked by a pupil of the senior class of the Muhmud-e Hotaki Girl's High School in Kabul. [passage omitted]

The protocol he spoke of was signed shortly after that; it defines the main tasks in cooperation between the SSM and the Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan (DYOA) up to the year 1990. The signing ceremony took place on the premises of the DYOA Central Committee under the floodlights of a television team (this had already become a rule during our delegation's stay in the country).

"Never before have we worked with such intensity as now," we were told during that meeting by Farid Mazdak, candidate member of the Central Committee Politburo of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) and first secretary of DYOA Central Committee. "Currently our main task is the policy of national reconciliation. We must learn to work under new conditions. One of our tasks is to draw closer to the young people in rural areas. The DYOA is often organizing various agricultural brigades. Small grain mills set up and operated by youth organizations are also very popular." [passage omitted] No wonder our Afghan friends (when discussing with us the suitable forms of assistance) expressed the wish that this assistance should include (inter alia) materials for such agricultural activity.

The official friendly visit paid by the SSM Central Committee delegation to Afghanistan culminated with a reception by Najmuddin Kawiani, Politburo member and secretary of the PDPA Central Committee. He stated that, within the framework of the undeclared war against Afghanistan, the U.S. Congress had released a total of more than $1 billion for military purposes. How can one prevent this? By open war? And where would an escalation of the conflict lead? That is why the party had agreed to the policy of national reconciliation. The echo evoked by it is steadily strengthening, for nobody else could offer anything more attractive.

What are the further prospects of the revolution under the new conditions? The party has given up its monopoly of power, but it has not given up power itself, N. Kawiani stressed. As regards the Geneva agreements, their signing has opened an era of struggle for their consistent implementation. And in this we will also need international support, including that of the youth movement.

Industrial Achievements, Goals Outlined

LD1805101088 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0448 GMT 17 May 88

[Text] Kabul, May 16, BAKHTAR—After agriculture, industry ranks second in Afghan economy. According to the Constitution, the government is obliged to pursue the policy that aims at rapid economic development and gives protection to all sectors of economy.

The main objectives of the current year's plan for industry is designed to meet the needs of the people, provide favourable conditions for rational and maximum use of material resources and create new employment opportunities in industry.

According to the envisaged plan, the gross product of the state and joint sectors was estimated to be Afs [Afghanis] 19.3 billion (at 1978 prices) or 8.1 per cent more than the preceding year their share in the factory gross product of industry will be 79.8 per cent. On the whole their share in the gross product of industry would increase from 47.7 per cent in 1987 to 48.6 per cent by the end of the current Afghan year which ends in March 20, 89.

According to plan, the current year would witness to the production of 21,000 tons of cotton, 201,000 tons of flour, 43,000 tons of bread and bakery products and 170,000 tons of coal.

This year the output of chemical fertilizers would reach its maximum at 121,000 tons, textile production would be 62 million metres of cloth, registering an increase of 12.7 per cent as comparing to the production in the preceding year.

Particular attention will be devoted to the purchase of wool for meeting the raw material needs of woolen textile mills in the country. To develop wool processing industry, establishment of wool washing factories in Ghazni, Zabul and Helmand Provinces is being studied.

According to the envisaged plan, mine prospecting and exploration activities are also being conducted at present. After several wells in different parts of the country are drilled natural gas reserves would increase and reach nine billion cubic metres. It would make a 2.5-fold increase as compared to 1987.

The economic policy of the state gives all-round assistance to the expansion and consolidation of industrial activities in the private sector. More attention is paid to meet the needs of industrialists and ensure further development of this sector.

The gross product of the private sector (including factory and handicraft products) would be Afs 20.4 billion registering a 4.1 per cent increase as compared to the preceding year.

The gross value of handicrafts would mark a 2.6 per cent increase worth about Afs 15.5 billion. Its share in the total industrial output has been estimated at 39.1 per cent and in the private sector at 76 per cent.

The gross value of factory production in 1367 is estimated at 24,2 Afs billion.

This amount is 8.2 per cent more than in the preceding year. Its share in the total of gross industrial output of the country would thus increase from 59.7 in 1366 to 60.9 per cent this year.

With the fulfilment of the envisaged quantitative and qualitative objective in these fields, the gross production of industry, mines and energy would mark a six per cent increase and reach Afs 39.7 billion.

Bangladesh

Khaleda Against Parliament Amending Constitution

BK1805132588 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 12 May 88 p 1

[Text] Begum Khaleda Zia, chief of BNP and leader of the Seven-Party Alliance, said on Wednesday that the present parliament had no right to pass any bill or amend the country's sacred Constitution.

The declaration of Islam as the state religion is neither a people's demand, nor it would solve the country's problems, she added.

Giving a call for united movement aiming at ouster of the Ershad Government, she was critical of the government for its failure to keep the prices of essential commodities within the reach of the common people.

Presided over Bazlul Baset, the meeting was held at Bangla School premises of Mirpur on the day.

Begum Zia was critical of raids on shops on the eve of Eid festivals. Posing a question she wanted to know how banned items could find place into the country through borders. Holding the government responsible for entry of foreign goods through borders, Begum Zia said the textile industries were facing closure following smuggling.

BNP Secretary General K.M. Obaidur Rahman said the aim of his party was ouster of the Ershad Government and restoration of democracy through united movement. Awami League is not our target, he said. Anybody opposed to the united movement, would be automatically isolated from the people, he said.

Begum Farid Hasan, Professor Jahanara Begum, Mr Fazlur Rahman Patal, Amanullah Aman and Mr Ehsanul Kabir addressed it.

India

Further Reportage, Comment on Temple Situation

45 Terrorists Surrender

BK1805125888 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] In Amritsar, 45 terrorists surrendered to the security forces in the Golden Temple complex this afternoon. All of them were hiding in the Harminder Saheb [inner sanctum of Golden Temple]. Some of them are suspected to be dread terrorists. The surrender followed appeals and warnings from the state inspector general of border police, Mr Chaman Lal, and district commissioner of Amritsar. A team of AIR correspondents witnessed the surrender.

The security forces are now in control of the old langhar [dining] building and the Ramgaria Bunga [building] in the Golden Temple complex. Talking to newsmen in the old langhar building, the director general of Punjab police, Mr K.P.S. Gill, said the basements of these two—taken over yesterday after mounting an operation—are yet to be explored. He said there may be some bodies inside the basement. A team of AIR correspondents report that there has been some respite in firing between the terrorists and security forces since this morning. A party of newsmen, who were escorted to the old langhar building where arms and ammunition and incriminating documents seized yesterday, were shown to them. Two highly decomposed bodies were recovered from the building this morning. The situation in curfew-bound areas continues to be peaceful.

'Cleared of All Terrorists'

BK1805163288 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 May 88

[Excerpts] The Golden Temple complex in Amritsar was cleared of all terrorists this afternoon with the surrender of the 46 militants emerging out of the Harmandir Saheb. The director general of the Punjab police, Mr K.P.S. Gill, said nine of them are dreaded terrorists; they included Malkiat Singh Ajnala, Nirvar Singh, Bagh Singh, Nishan Singh Kalanore, Chanchal Singh Udoke, Kulwant Singh Golewal, Bachitar Singh, Chaman Singh, and Major Singh. Many of them carried rewards on their heads ranging between 50,000 to 100,000 rupees. Soon after the successful operation, the Amritsar deputy commissioner, Mr Surjit Singh, told newsmen that no militant is now left in the entire Golden Temple complex. Two terrorists, Karid Singh and Bagha Singh, committed suicide in the parikrama [walkway around the Golden Temple]. A woman, who was among those surrendered, is the wife of Chanchal Singh Udoke. A number of dead bodies are believed to be in the Golden Temple complex; they are to be removed by the Red Cross.

Mr Gill said not a single person of the security forces stepped inside the parikrama during the entire operation; nor a single shot was fired toward Harmandir Saheb. The security forces did not suffer any casualties.

But elsewhere in the state terrorists stepped up their orgy of violence. In a ghastly incident, they gunned down 30 laborers at Mujad village in Ropar District last night. The laborers working on the Sutlej-Yamuna link canal were sleeping in a camp when they were killed in cold blood.

The surrender at the Golden Temple complex came as a climax at 1630 in the afternoon when the authorities made surrender calls on loudspeakers without declaring a cease-fire. They asked the terrorists to wave some cloth if they wanted to surrender. The announcement also warned that no other movement would be permitted. Soon afterwards, the militants waved saffron cloth from a number of places from the main Harmandir Saheb. The authorities then made another announcement asking them to come out of the temple on a specified route. The 46 who came out of Harmandir Sageb moved toward the langhar building with their hands raised as senior police officials watched. A news agency report says two of them suddenly rushed toward a room. They were killed when security forces opened fire. [passage omitted]

The security forces are now engaged in cleansing the Golden Temple of any arms, ammunition, and explosives. After this, priority will be to restore the daily kirtan [devotional singing], worship, and other religious ceremonies in the temple. These ceremonies, which were being conducted without any interruption for centuries, had been hampered by the terrorist activities. [passage omitted]

Jathedars [Sikh religious leaders] and members of 40 gurdwaras [Sikh temples] in the capital thanked the prime minister for coming to the help of the entire Sikh community and rescuing the Golden Temple from the hold of terrorists. In a resolution passed at their congregation today, they said the Sikh community is particularly gratified that the security forces have managed to keep intact the sanctity of the Golden Temple.

The Haryana chief minister, Mr Devi Lal, thanked the Center for clearing the Golden Temple of terrorists. He said this has saved the people, particularly the Sikhs, from a traumatic experience. Mr Devi Lal spoke to the home minister, Mr Buta Singh, telephonically this evening.

Punjab Governor's Statement

BK1905034088 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The Punjab governor, Mr S.S. Ray, has asked all terrorists in the state to surrender with arms. The governor's statement came soon after the Golden Temple complex was cleared of all terrorists with the surrender of 46 of them to the security forces yesterday. Mr Ray said there is no place for violence and terrorism in India. About the successful end of the operation in the Golden Temple complex, the governor said this was a day of great relief for all Indians.

The surrender at the temple complex came as a climax when the authorities made the surrender calls (?on) loudspeakers without declaring a cease-fire. The director general of Punjab police, Mr K.P.S. Gill, said 9 of the 46, who surrendered yesterday, are dreaded terrorists. Soon after these operations, the Amritsar deputy commissioner, Mr Sabdjit Singh, told newsmen that no militant is now left in the entire Golden Temple complex.

Five more bodies were recovered from the complex by Red Cross officials last night. The security forces are now engaged in cleansing the Golden Temple complex of arms, ammunition, and explosives. After this, the priority will be to restore the daily kirtans], worship, and other religious ceremonies in the temple. These ceremonies, which were being conducted without any interruption for centuries, had been hampered by terrorist activities.

Meanwhile, three terrorists were killed in two separate encounters with security forces in Amritsar District last night. Some arms and ammunition were recovered from them. Terrorists shot dead two persons in Gurdaspur District and one in Jullundur District. In another incident, two jawans [soldiers] were injured when terrorists opened fire after the security forces raided their hideout in Jullundur District.

Gandhi Cites Sikhs' Support

BK1905035088 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The prime minister has said that the pressure on the terrorists will be kept up to ensure that places of worship remain free of undesirable elements. He said the Sikh masses in Punjab have supported the operation launched by the security forces to flush out terrorists from the Golden Temple complex. Unlike the operation in 1984, this time they did not speak of desecration of the temple. Mr Rajiv Gandhi was speaking to newsmen at an 'Id Milan [reception marking celebration of Muslim festival of Id al-Fitr] function in New Delhi yesterday. He said the flow of arms into the Golden Temple will be effectively checked.

About the recent secretary-level talks between India and Pakistan on terrorism and arms smuggling, the prime minister said India had always welcomed talks, but the main problem with Pakistan is that it took no follow-up action to implement the decisions taken at such meetings.

Gandhi Reviews Punjab Issues

BK1905090588 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 19 May 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] At a high-level meeting in New Delhi today, the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, reviewed the situation in Punjab following flushing out of terrorists from the Golden Temple complex. The meeting considered further measures to restore normalcy and sanctity of the Golden Temple. It was attended by the home minister, Mr Buta Singh; the minister of state for home, Mr P.M. Chidambaram; the Punjab governor, Mr S.S. Ray; his adviser, Mr J.F. Ribeiro; and the state police chief, Mr K.P.S. Gill.

Several political and religious leaders have hailed the government action in flushing out the terrorists from the Golden Temple complex. The general secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Mr Krishan Lal Sharma, said the security forces have done a commendable job. Addressing a press conference in Jammu today, he urged the Sikh head priests, the SGPC, and the Akali leaders to ensure that the dignity of the holy shrine uhould be preserved. The former speaker of Punjab and senior Congress-I leader, Mr Brij Bhushan Mehra, in a statement accused the Akali leaders of indulging in whipping up communal passions and supporting the cause of the militants instead of adopting a bold stand against the terrorists. The president of the three Takht Sachkhand Gurdwara [Sikh Religious Temple] Board, Granthi Sant Singh, has urged the government to ensure that the terrorists do not enter the temple again and stock weapons there.

3 Pakistani Intruders, 8 Others Killed in Punjab

BK1905065288 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0630 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Eight people have been killed by terrorists in separate incidents in Kapurthala and Ludhiana Districts since last night. While five persons, including two mahanths [Hindu priests], were shot dead in Kapurthala, three were gunned down in Ludhiana.

Three intruders from Pakistan were also killed in an encounter with the security forces near Fatehpur Post in the Lapuke area on the Indo-Pak border in Amritsar District. A large quantity of arms and ammunition were recovered from them. One terrorist managed to cross over to Pakistan.

19 Die in 'Terrorist' Violence

BK1905075488 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] In Punjab, 19 people have been killed in separate incidents of terrorist violence since last night. Five have been injured. Three intruders from Pakistan were killed in an encounter with the security forces. The security forces have arrested seven terrorists. A large quantity of arms and ammunition were recovered from the arrested terrorists and the killed intruders.

While six persons were killed in Amritsar District, five have been gunned down by terrorists in Kapurthala District. Three each were killed in Ludhiana and Gurdaspur Districts, while two died in Jullundur District. Three terrorists were killed in encounters with the security forces in Amritsar District.

Shoot-on-Sight Orders Issued in Aurangabad

BK1805131088 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The death toll in the violence and police firing in Aurangabad city in Maharashtra State has risen to 11. The police today opened fire at four places in which five persons were killed. The curfew was relaxed for 4 hours this morning. Several cases of stabbing and arson were reported.

The chief minister, Mr S.P. Chavan, today visited the city. Addressing a peace committee meeting, he said shoot-at-sight orders were issued to the police. He announced 10,000 rupees as immediate relief to the next of the deceased and relief up to 5,000 rupees to the injured in the incidents. The Maharashtra minister of state for home affairs, Mr J.T. Mahajan, and senior officials are camping in the city.

400 Rounded Up; Curfew Eased

BK1905080488 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] In Aurangabad, curfew has been relaxed for 2 hours from 1100 this morning. No untoward incidents have been reported since last evening. The situation is said to be under control. Four hundred persons have been rounded up for rioting and arson.

Shoot-on-Sight Orders Issued in Sidlaghatta

BK1905031388 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] In Karnataka, shoot-at-sight orders were issued and a dusk-to-dawn curfew clamped in Sidlaghatta town of Kolar District yesterday following violent incidents. The director general of police told our Bangalore correspondent that the situation in the area is now under control. One person was killed yesterday when police opened fire to control violent mobs at (Kellonur) village in the district.

5 Bomb Blasts Reported in Darjeeling Areas

BK1805155588 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] More reports of bomb explosions have been received from different parts of Darjeeling hill areas during the last 24 hours. Our Kurseong correspondent reports that GNLF [Gurkha National Liberation Front] militants attacked state armed police camp at 10th mile in Kalimpong last evening. There was no report of any casualty.

Five bombs exploded last night in different parts of Darjeeling town, including Kagjhora, Rajbari, and Chandmari areas.

Iran

Prime Minister on Restoring Ties With France

LD1905091388 Tehran IRNA in English 0850 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA—Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi said here Thursday that delegations from Iran and France are to meet in the near future for restoration of diplomatic ties.

The premier who was commenting on normalization of relations between the two countries expressed hope that restoring diplomatic ties will pave the way for removal of problems and also establishment of better Tehran-Paris ties. He also hoped that the two countries will be able to lay a sound foundation for good mutual relations.

France severed ties with Iran in July 1987 following the so-called "war of embassies" and a dispute over an Iranian Embassy man in Paris Vahid Gorji, accused by the French Government of involvement in a series of bomb attacks in Paris in fall of 1986.

Tehran on French Decision

LD1805204288 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The Government of France tonight announced it intends to restore diplomatic relations between Paris and Tehran. Michel Rocard, the new prime minister of France, announced the decision of the new government at the end of a cabinet session.

Rocard, a Socialist, formed the new French cabinet only a few days ago. The desire to establish new diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran was discussed during the government of Jacques Chirac, the outgoing French prime minister. Although some people said that the idea of restoring relations was solely the desire of the Chirac government, today's decision indicates that in the overall political assessment, France is determined to renew diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Francois Mitterrand, the Socialist president of France, 3 weeks ago, a short while before the second round of the French presidential elections, had indirectly referred to his inclination to review French relations with other countries in the region. At that time Mitterrand said the sight of the pictures of Iraq's chemical crime in Halabjah—which he said would inflict pain on the heart of any human being—could persuade France to review her relations with other countries.

AFP Notes Anti-Regime Demonstrations, Clashes

AU1905125788 Paris AFP in English 1234 GMT 19 May 88

[Elaine Merel report]

[Text] Paris, May 19 (AFP)—Several people have been killed in clashes in Iran over the last few weeks between radical reformers close to the son of Iranian spiritual guide Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni and more conservative clergymen, acccording to witnesses just back from Iran.

They spoke of six deaths in the central city of Esfahan and of violent demonstrations in Qom, Mashhad and Tabriz pitting radicals, backing social reforms and state control of the economy, against Islamic clergymen who reject state intervention.

Three of the six killed were reportedly executed.

The reports follow recent nationwide legislative elections in which the radicals, with ties to the Ayatollah's son Ahmad Khomeyni, emerged the winners.

In the capital Tehran, it is the war with Iraq that has led to recent tension, as residents fear a resumption in Iraqi surface-to-surface missile attacks.

Emergency evacuation procedures to camps outside the city have been readied while final exams for primary and secondary school pupils were brought forward.

Ayatollah Khomeyni, seeking to calm the situation, delivered an address on Tuesday marking the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and called on Iranians and their leaders to remain united.

Factions within the leadership are also at odds on the continuation of the seven-year-old war. At least two important religious figures, Ayatollahs Golpayegani and Mar'ashi-Najafi, recently urged Ayatollah Khomeyni to authorize them to negotiate a settlement with Baghdad, Iranian sources said here.

But they were rebuffed, as the country's spiritual leader rejected any talks with Iraq—notably after a string of military setbacks over the last month.

After a month-long lull, Iran earlier this week went on the offensive in the Gulf war, announcing 3,000 Iraqi casualties in a ground operation into northeastern Iraq.

In the Gulf, meanwhile, shipping sources reported attacks by Iranian gunboats on two tankers in the last two days.

Analysts said the operations were designed to put an end to internal bickering and to unite all parties in struggle against Iraq.

Witnesses arriving here said disturbances had continued this week in the central Iranian city of Esfahan. Following the resignation and the arrest of an anti-radical Friday prayer leader in the nearby town of Khomeynishahr, residents demonstrated before the prosecutor's headquarters in Esfahan.

The demonstrations in Esfahan reportedly featured slogans hostile to Ayatollah Khomeyni and the chief religious leader in the region, Ayatollah Taheri, who is close to Ahmad Khomeyni.

In the Shi'ite holy city of Qom, south of Tehran, witnesses said there were violent confrontations last week between young clergymen and an older colleague who had criticized directives by Ayatollah Khomeyni favoring the radicals as "contrary to religion."

Incidents were also reported in Mashhad in the northeast and Tabriz in the northwest after election results were contested.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Addresses Majlis Session

LD1905130488 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani addressed an open session of the Majlis today on the successful "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-6" operations.

Thanking the fighters of Islam for this success, he called these operations a suitable response to the recent mischiefs of the Zionist regime of Iraq, as well as a timely warning to the close cooperation between the United States and the Iraqi regime in their confrontation with the Islamic Republic. He expressed the hope that this new move, which was achieved in the heart of Iraqi Kurdistan, wherein strategic heights between two important provinces of Irbil and Al-Sulaymaniyah fell into the hands of the fighters of Islam, would provide valuable impact among military achievements.

According to the same report, a government bill on the powers and duties of the minister of justice, in cases where the Supreme Judicial Council delegates its financial, administrative, and non-judicial personnel recruitment to the minister, was discussed in the Majlis open session in the presence of the Council of Guardians. The bill, which in the previous Majlis session received members' approval as a doubly urgent bill, was approved.

The government bill on exemption of banks from the general regulations for Civil Service employment was debated in the presence of the Council of Guardians. It was approved by the Majlis.

In the same session the government bill on employment for the Islamic Republic of Iran's literacy campaign was debated in its second reading. Having approved 25 articles of the said bill, the Majlis decided to continue its reading in the next open session.

Prime Minister Interviewed on Cabinet Meeting

NC1805192788 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 May 88

[Interview with Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi following 18 May cabinet meeting by unidentified correspondent in Tehran—recorded]

[Text] [Unidentified correspondent] After today's Cabinet session, Prime Minister Musavi explained ways of making use of the human resource factor in the agricultural sector. Mr Musavi, one of the issues discussed at today's cabinet session was about agricultural problems and ways for people to participate in this field. Could you please comment on this?

[Musavi] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. In recent years, the government's policy was based on ways of promoting extensive investment by the people in the field of agriculture, and for this purpose the Ministry of Agriculture initiated schemes in the provinces for land allocation and for providing investment facilities. Plans were also made for the various fields in which these investments could be made, for example in the fields of livestock, agriculture, and various categories of cultivation. Some work has been done in this regard. The Fisheries Department has been separated from the Ministry of Agriculture. It is now under the aegis of the [Construction] Jihad Ministry, where it is being utilized for fish spawning and breeding on a national level. Other fields are [words indistinct] exported. In addition, we are now more confident that a firm policy should be adopted in order to eliminate fluctuations. It was like this before, but the government has made significant progress in recent years in this area. Some items of good news for

our dear people were discussed at the cabinet session. There exists great potential this year in the agricultural sector, for example, in the livestock area.

[Correspondent] On Sunday, the committee for the expansion of nonoil exports was convened, and important decisions were made in this regard. What is the government's plan for absorbing and directing people's investments, as well as those of the private sector, in the area of expanding nonoil exports?

[Musavi] Over the span of the two years the government has systematically—and it may be said almost daily—pursued the issue of exports, and we can now see the results. We have progressed from less than $500 million worth of exports to more than $1 billion. This is the first time that our country has exceeded the $1 billion mark in exports, particularly in view of the losses stemming from the previously dependent structure of our country's economy. This is a heartening trend, and we hope it will increase this year.

Of course, God willing, these objectives will be reached through the efforts of all departments concerned. If we work hard, God willing, we may be able to exceed our goal, that is, exceed our $1.5 billion objective. When the agricultural sector was discussed in today's cabinet session, it was stated that we have a potential for agricultural exports worth $1.6 billion. However, this requires various kinds of investment in packaging and in marketing. We can reach the $1.6 billion mark without increasing any particular branch of production if extensive investments are made.

At present, as far as imports and exports regulations are concerned, concessions are regularly taken into consideration, and attempts are made to strengthen the various mechanisms planned in customs, government departments, and other fields so that this work can move ahead.

On the other hand, efforts are being made to ensure the government's rights. For the first time ever we had remarkable sales against our letters of credit last year; this has helped in all departments. This year I have observed that the various departments, particularly the production department and others that also want to export items, have opened accounts against these export earnings—a great impetus. We are therefore presently taking advantage of this incentive. Valuable exchange earnings awards are given, and there are numerous facilities being offered. God willing, we shall witness the gradual expansion of this important sector of the country's economy as we did over the past two years.

[Correspondent] One of the current political issues of the region, which has attracted world Muslims' public opinion, is Lebanon. What are the Islamic Republic Government's recommendations to the warring parties on ending the clashes?

[Musavi] Lebanon has had a great revolutionary movement in recent years and has delivered blows to Israel and the United States. They owe this to their return to Islam, the Koran, and Islamic fraternity. At the same time it is regrettable that clashes have occurred between the Islamic forces there. The sacred system of the Islamic Republic is, in principle, opposed to these clashes and favors a speedy end to the clashes, so that all weapons can be aimed at Zionism, U.S. imperialism in Lebanon, and other aliens in Lebanon. Iran favors unity of all the Islamic forces. This policy we recommend and promote.

Further Reportage on Persian Gulf Seminar

LD1805150688 Tehran IRNA in English 1445 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 18, IRNA—Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh was the next speaker at the Persian Gulf seminar and elaborated on the key role and significance of energy in today's world.

Aqazadeh, refering to incidents in the Persian Gulf since the victory of the Islamic Revolution (1979), said that the events indicate big powers' designs for dominating the region.

On the importance of the waterway, the oil minister said that OPEC member states possess 70 percent of the total oil reserves in the world, of which 60 percent lie in the Persian Gulf.

OPEC with estimated reserves of 500 billion barrels has the capacity to produce oil for another 70 years and this explains why the superpowers are seeking to keep their politico-economic balance in the region, he said.

Pointing to the growing concern of the U.S. and its allies about the future of energy in the world, Aqazadeh predicted that Persian Gulf states may draw up the energy policy of the world by 1995.

Also addressing the seminar on the Persian Gulf was Director-General of the Institute for Political Studies of the Foreign Ministry 'Abbas Maleki who spoke on regional security.

Maleki said that since expansion of Tehran's ties with the littoral states is in the interest of all regional people and is also effective in cutting foreign powers' hands from the region, the need for fostering understanding and a coordinated policy among regional countries seems more obvious than ever before.

He expressed hope that creation of a group security system among Persian Gulf states would lead to the withdrawal of superpowers from the region and an honorable end to the Iraqi-imposed war.

The Foreign Ministry official also proposed Persian Gulf littoral states to form with Islamic Iran a joint military force to confront foreign power threats and ensure regional security.

Among other officials delivering speech on the first day of the seminar were Engineer Sahab, an expert on geographical affairs, Foreign Ministry adviser 'Ali Musavi Garmarudi and Engineer Hami, a university professor.

Changes in General Staff Hierarchy Examined

NC1805071088 Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Persian to Iran 1530 GMT 16 May 88

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Changes have been made in the hierarchy of the Iranian Armed Forces General Staff. Brigadier General 'Ali Shahbazi was appointed chief of the General Staff, replacing Brigadier General Esma'il Sohrabi, who has been appointed to the position of observer in the Supreme Defense Council.

What is the reason behind these changes? Various views have been offered. Some believe that this reshuffling is due to the ineffective planning of military operations by the former chief of staff. They consider it probable that the mistakes in planning led to the recent defeat of the Iranian forces in the Al-Faw Peninsula. Also, a lack of (?caution) led to the destruction of two Iranian warships in battles with U.S. naval-military forces in the Persian Gulf.

(?Other views) have also been propounded. Some believe that the former chief of the General Staff (?was a victim) of the differences between the Armed Forces and the powerful IRGC. There has been increasing dissatisfaction in the Army for some time now, stemming from the existence of the hand-picked IRGC. This is because the IRGC enjoys spectacular benefits and privileges while the major burden of the war operations (?and its heavy damages and casualties) is shouldered by the [word indistinct] Army personnel. It is possible that because of these factors, Esma'il Sohrabi was not very enthusiastic about the coordination of the activities of the Armed Forces and the IRGC, which (?ruling clergymen) are calling for.

Of course, these changes in the command of the Iranian Armed Forces are a domestic affair. However, special attention is attached to it from outside Iran as well. Those concerned with the dangerous exacerbation of incidents in the Persian Gulf hope to find signs in these changes of a new policy in the Iranian leadership toward the termination of war operations and practical steps aimed at implementing UN Security Council Resolution No 598.

The long bloodshed between Iran and Iraq should be stopped. Of course, hopes and aspirations cannot replace realities. Many (?believed) that the former leadership of the General Staff was only the shield [words indistinct]. However, Iranian officials present at the ceremony in which Brigadier General Shahbazi was appointed to his new post issued calls to employ all of the country's potential to meet the needs of the war. [Words indistinct] have still not lost the hope of achieving a victory over Iraq, with the assistance of skillful military leaders and by inflicting a so-called destiny-making attack. How many such attacks have taken place in the past? The military operations have been concentrated mainly along the Iran-Iraq border. Of course, [words indistinct] in the other parts of the country. The outburst of the cities war only brought about death and destruction for the residents of Tehran, Esfahan, Baghdad, and Basra. In the tankers war, both countries have suffered heavy damage to their oil production capabilities. This war has also (?hindered) international navigation in the Persian Gulf.

Experience has shown sufficiently and convincingly the failure of the strategy of solving conflicts through war. (?The only way) to emerge from a military impasse is to display new thought aimed at a cease-fire and the solution of conflicts through political means.

Air Force Commander Denies Plane Shot Down

LD1905064188 Tehran IRNA in English 0632 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA—A commander of the Iranian Air Force here Thursday categorically denied an Iraqi claim of having downed an Iranian fighter on Wednesday.

The commander told IRNA that all Iranian fighters returned safely to bases Wednesday after successfully carrying out their missions and heavily pounding enemy positions.

Iraq Wednesday claimed that it had downed an Iranian fighters near Iran-Iraq border.

IRGC Spokesman on Upcoming Troop Dispatch

LD1805194188 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The interview with the IRGC spokesman is the subject of our first news report.

With the approval of the Supreme War Support Council, on 5 June 1988 on the anniversary of the bloody uprising of the Muslim people of Iran, the third round of the extraordinary warrior dispatch—warriors of his holiness Muhammad, peace be upon him, and his posterity—to the fronts will take place all over the country. This morning in an interview Afshar, the spokesman of the IRGC announced this news item. He stressed: If we intend to strengthen the frontline positions, if we intend to achieve victory by the fighters of Islam in the fastest possible way, then we must perform all duties relating to the people, the executive establishment, and the military forces in the best possible manner.

He added: The War Support Headquarters in the provincial centers must be more active; they must decisively accomplish those missions assigned to them. Meanwhile,

the administrative establishments must give top priority to the war in planning and as such they must remove all the military and combatants' problems at all levels.

Referring to an agreement between the IRGC cooperatives and the minister of commerce on eliminating employment problems and providing for the needs of the combatant's families, he stressed the importance of training the forces and said: It is necessary for all forces which have not yet received training to report to IRGC training centers, according to a timetable, to receive training.

Offering his appreciation to the people of Mazandaran, the IRGC spokesman said: This province is the best province; none of its units has ever had a manpower shortage.

On Saddam's misdeeds in the Persian Gulf, supported by regional reactionaries and the criminal United States, Afshar said: It has been proved that these misdeeds hurt their own interests. The IRGC Navy is ready to confront decisively the conspiracy being plotted jointly by the United States and the Saddam regime and which has the support of the regional reactionaries.

Stressing the fact that if the United States enters a war with Iran it would sustain blows, he said: The American people must object to their regime's aggressions more decisively. They must save their regime from the Persian Gulf death trap before it is too late.

Tehran Cites REUTER on Norwegian Tanker Attack

LD1905111888 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Quoting shipping sources, REUTER reported that the 55,361-tonne Norwegian tanker "Berge Strand" was attacked by gunboats at 0730 today and was set ablaze. The "Berge Strand" had entered the Persian Gulf from Singapore to load liquid gas.

Combat Operations in War With Iraq Continue

Khatem ol-Anbiya' Communique

LD1805122888 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 May 88

[Excerpts] The following communique of the Khatem ol-Anbiya' Headquarters, center for the operations of the IRGC and the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-6" operation, was issued today:

In the name of God, the compassionate. the merciful. [passage omitted] Muslim and noble ummah of Iran. Your combatant and enemy-smashing sons, the resistant nation, are continuing their heroic battle in response to the latest mischiefs of the Ba'thist aggressor regime which is being supported by the United States in the Persian Gulf. Your sons also are responding to the calls for assistance from the oppressed Kurdish Muslims of Iraq who continue to face the destruction and chemical bombing of their villages by the Ba'thist regime ruling over Iraq. They are fighting in response to the chemical bombings to avenge the blood of the oppressed martyrs of these crimes and of the other martyrs of the criminal enemy attacks on residential areas.

Late last night our troops began the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-6" operation, code-named "O Lord of the Faithful"—may God's peace be upon him. The operation began in the general region of Mawat. The powerful fighters of the Ground Forces of the IRGC, with help from Almighty God and supported by divine promise granted to God's guests during the blessed month of Ramadan, succeeded in the first hours of this operation in a surprise attack, bringing the enemy to the east of the city and the Dukan Dam in Iraq's Al-Sulaymaniyah Province under heavy fire. After defeating the jack-booted mercenaries of Iraq, they forced them to abandon their many positions in this region.

The active forces of the army of monotheism, supported by artillery fire and by the hard-working sappers of the Construction Jihad and of the IRGC, succeeded in liberating the strategic Heights of Asas, including heights Nos 2546, 2301, 2221; and the Shaykh Muhammad Heights comprising summits Nos 2649, 2457, 2466, 2437, 2069 and 2099, and also strategic heights Nos 2266 and 2100. With the liberation of these heights, more than 25 square kms of Al-Sulaymaniyah Province fell under the complete control of the defenders of Islam and of the Islamic homeland.

As a consequence of these operations, the 448th and 606th Brigades of the 4th Infantry Division of the enemy were destroyed by 30-70 percent, that is, more than 2,000 troops out of the total number of these units were killed and wounded.

A report from the Najaf operational headquarters in the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-6" zone states that in these operations a substantial number of the enemy's troops were captured. So far, 407 of these have been evacuated from the frontlines. Lieutenant Colonel Salah Ahmad Hasan, commander of the 2d Battalion of the 448th Brigade, is among those captured. During these operations a substantial amount of light and semiheavy weapons and armored equipment of the Zionist enemy was seized by the brave fighters of Islam's army.

The fighters of the Ground Forces of the IRGC are now occupying their new positions and are busy strengthening them. They are also altering and moving their former positions in order to remove them from the range of enemy fire. They are now to the east of Dukan and the Dukan Dam. There is no help except from Almighty God!

[Signed] The Khatem ol-Anbiya' Headquarters

Iraqi Equipment Near Dukan Hit

LD1800171100 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] According a Central News Unit report, the brave epic Army aviators of the Islamic Republic of Iran carried out more than 162 sorties during the successful

"Bayt al-Moqaddas-6" operations. Effectively supporting the fighters of the army of monotheism, they set on fire and destroyed a considerable amount of enemy armored equipment.

An Army aviation operational commander this afternoon in an interview said: The Army aviator pilots, accompanied by hard-working technical personnel, supported the epic-making mobilization forces who fought alongside other combatant brothers in the "Bayt al-Moqaddas-6" operations as in previous operations. Their logistical and support flights transported hundreds of able fighters of the army of Islam to forward positions and fired on enemy armored equipment east of Dukan and the Dukan Dam. As a result they set fire to a considerable amount of this equipment and destroyed it.

According to the operational commander, during the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-6" operations, the brave Army aviators successfully carried out more than 92 hours of flying over the combat area without sustaining any damage.

Iraqi Gas Attack Kills 3

LD1805145888 Tehran IRNA in English 1450 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 18, IRNA—Three civilians were martyred and eight others wounded when Iraqi warplanes dropped chemical bombs on Nei [placename as received] village on the outskirts of the northwestern Iranian border town of Marivan, in Kordestan Province, at 11:35 hours local time (08:05 GMT) Wednesday.

Immediately after the Iraqi poison gas attack, Iranian anti-chemical units went into action decontamininating the effects of toxic gases in the region.

3,000 Flee From Toxic Gas

LD1805184488 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Following the latest mischief of the Zionist Iraqi regime with its chemical bombings of the regions in the north of Iraq, during last night and today, more than 3,000 Iraqi subjects took refuge in Iran. According to an IRNA report, these people have been housed, at present, in one of the country's northwestern cities and their basic needs have been met. The vast majority of these refugees are Kurdish women and children.

Communique No 3,206

LD1805183588 Tehran IRNA in English 1807 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 18, IRNA—Scores of Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded and several enemy bunkers, a munitions dump and three vehicles were destroyed in the northwestern fronts by Iranian artillery fire Tuesday, said a military communique here Wednesday.

Communique Number 3206 released by the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces said that a number of Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded and several enemy gun emplacements set ablaze in the western sectors in artillery duels with Iranian combatants yesterday.

In the southern fronts, Iranian forces pounded Iraqi positions with artillery and mortar fire Tuesday, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy troops and wrecking some bunkers and observation posts of theirs.

Meanwhile, Iranian Air Force jets carried out their routine patrol missions over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman Tuesday, providing air cover for the Navy and reconnoitering 19 foreign vessels in the waterway.

An Iraqi patrol convoy attempting to inflitrate Iranian positions in Dehloran, western sectors, yesterday sustained several casualties and was forced to flee under heavy fire of Iran's Muslim forces.

Iranian Gendarmerie forces traded artillery fire with Iraqi troops in their zones of influence yesterday, killing several enemy soldiers and destroying four bunkers of theirs.

Exchange of artillery and mortar fire continued sporadically all over the battlefields yesterday raging somewhat more heavily in Nahr 'Anbar and Hajj 'Umran southern and northwestern sectors. Iraqi troops suffered heavy losses in men and equipment.

Iranian artillery fire disrupted operations of Iraqi tanks in Helaleh, Nahr 'Anbar and Maymak Tuesday, concluded the communique.

Flag of Freedom Notes New Organization

NC1905085188 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] A group of patriotic Iranian officers abroad have formed a group called the Organization of the Union of Iran's Military Personnel [Sazman-e Ettehad-e Nezamian-e Iran]. The organization has issued a statement listing its objectives as follows: revival of respect for the trampled rights of the Iranian military cadre; extension of moral and material support for the purest and bravest children of the homeland; creation of solidarity and further bonds among Iran's genuine patriots; and formation of a powerful organization consisting of the strongest and most active patriots.

The statement adds that this organization is not affiliated with any political group and encompasses the soldier fighting from his blood-stained position in the war in defense of the homeland to the exiled general.

The statement gives the organization's address as follows: Postfach 1672; 8520 Erlangen, West Germany. The second address for the organization is: Postfach 700808; 8000 Munich, West Germany.